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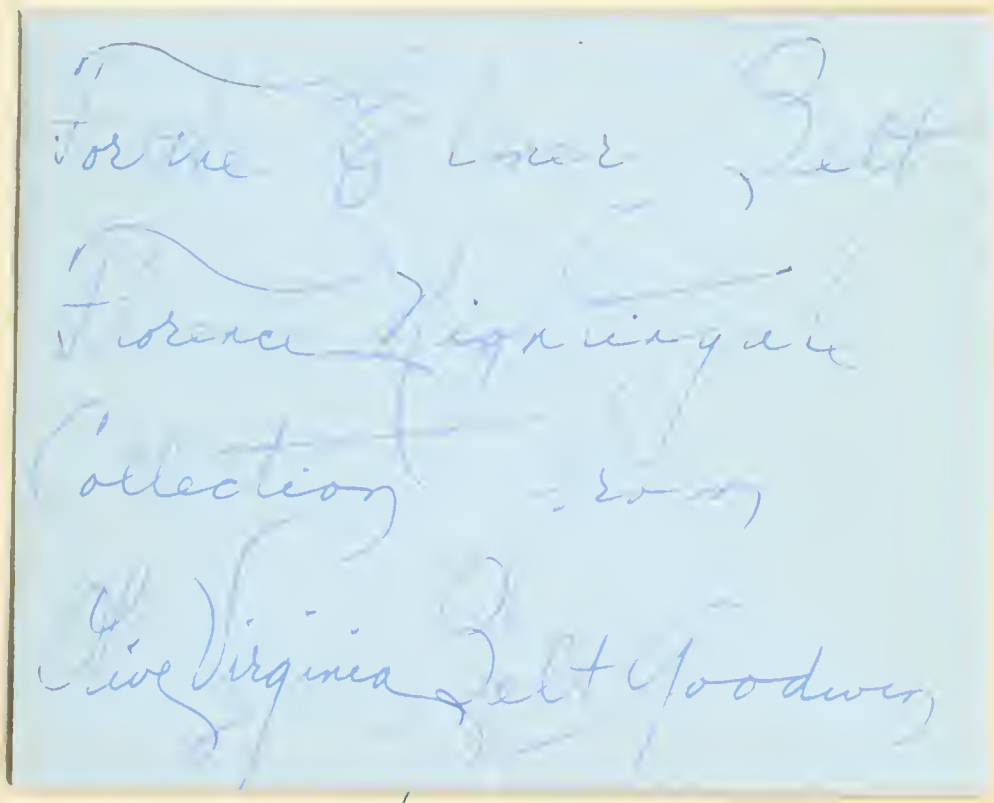

Olive Virginia Goodwin

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Adelaide Stearns King

WORLD-NOTED WOMEN;

OR,

TYPES

OF

WOMANLY ATTRIBUTES OF ALL LANDS AND AGES.

BY

MARY COWDEN CLARKE,

AUTHOR OF "THE IRON COUSIN," "THE GIRLHOOD OF SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES,"
"THE COMPLETE CONCORDANCE TO SHAKESPEARE,"
ETC., ETC.

Illustrated

WITH SEVENTEEN ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL, FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS
BY CHARLES STAAL.

"The world's large tongue proclaims you."
SHAKESPEARE.

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PREFACE.

Presenting together in a collected form of analytical disquisition, and pictorial illustration, several of the women most noted in the world's annals, it is interesting to consider the individuality marking each; and the curious variety of respective distinction, which has set these personages apart, as either renowned or notorious, above the ordinary range of their sisterhood. In thus considering them, I have taken leave to judge exceptional characters by exceptional rules; and, since this selection was made for me,—not chosen by myself,—I have written upon them with large (not so much *allowance*, as) construction.

I have treated the subjects appointed for me to discuss, with my utmost candour, and with as much of discrimination and judgment as in me lay. I have endeavoured to look upon them with unprejudiced eyes; and to throw myself as much as possible into the periods in which they lived, and the events among which they moved. I have tried to judge them according to the complexion of the eras in which they figured, and the incidents which coloured their opinions, their words, and their actions. Lord Bacon,—that great authority in judgment, critical, philosophical, and legal,—has told us, that "it is the part of a just judge to take into consideration not only facts but the times and circumstances of facts;" so, in weighing the facts connected with the Women's characters assembled in this book, I have done my best to render them justice in consonance with this Verulam rule.

In regarding these World-noted Women, who have severally created so much interest, and awakened so much emotion in the different spheres wherein they existed, it were idle to view them otherwise than as isolated exemplars of special qualities; they are not so much types of a class of women, as types of particular womanly attributes; and, far from their all being looked upon as models, they are, in some instances, to be beheld as beacons of warning. With this borne in mind, it affords a fascinating study to contemplate a woman like Cleopatra,—that "Serpent of old Nile,"—she, who held Mark Antony's heart in thrall, and "caught him in

her strong toil of grace;" or a woman like Isabella of Castile, who was virtuous as she was wise, modest as she was illustrious.

It is also interesting to notice the links of historic association which connect such widely various women as Valentina, Joan of Arc, Margaret of Anjou, Lady Jane Grey, Isabella of Castile, Maria Theresa, and Catherine II., through the long series of years, and separate lands in which they respectively lived. As thus:—"le beau Dunois" bore a part in both Valentina's and Joan of Arc's history; Margaret was niece to the French king, Charles VII., who, as Dauphin, was the object of Joan's loyal championship; Lady Jane Grey was grand-daughter to Charles Brandon, who married the widow-queen of Louis XII., grandson to Valentina; and so forth, along the chain of circumstance. Leigh Hunt, in a delightful essay entitled "Social Genealogy," shows how the present generation may have shaken hands with Shakespeare himself, by this "linked sweetness long drawn out" of cordially interchanged palm-clasping. And by similar pleasant tricks of the imagination we may trace the connection between the strangely differing World-noted Women who appear side by side in these pages.

It may be well here to observe that I have ventured to annex translations (so close as to be almost *literal*) of quoted passages for the behoof of those who may not be conversant with the language in which the originals are written.

I gladly avail myself, also, of the opportunity now presented, to offer my thanks to those friends,—some, of very recent date, and who therefore deserve the greater acknowledgment, since they assisted one comparatively a stranger to them,—who, with kindest promptitude, helped me in procuring such literary sources for research as my distance from old familiar native book-haunts prevented my readily obtaining.

I must not omit, likewise, to assign the credit of the "Joan of Arc" where it is due, in stating that it has been contributed by another hand than mine; a lady of Philadelphia, widely known in the ranks of literature as Grace Greenwood, having supplied the memoir of that glorious but misprized heroine.

Especially pleasant to me is it, to recognize the debt of gratitude I owe to my generous friend, Mrs. Balmanno, of New York, who has written the account of "Pocahontas" for me in this work.

MARY COWDEN CLARKE.

NICE, *June*, 1857.

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SAPPHO.

The name of Sappho is almost identical in the mind with the word Poetess. Hundreds of women have written verse; but of the very few women who have attained the renown of living to posterity as worthy to bear the honoured title of poetess, Sappho ranks pre-eminent. She stands at the head of that select sisterhood privileged to take place among those upon whom Wordsworth invokes divine favour:

> "Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
> Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,——
> The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
> Of truth and pure delight, by heavenly lays!"

Raphael, prince of painters, has given Sappho a conspicuous position in his picture of "Mount Parnassus:"—She is seated on the left-hand front; her beautiful plain face looking up in eager intelligence towards a group of Earth's greatest poets. It was a piece of fine taste in Raphael, thus placing the woman-poet as it were at the foot of those grand men, with her eyes turned in sympathetic spirit up among them.

To Sappho was awarded the exalted distinction of being called

the "Tenth Muse," as worthy to rank with her whom Dan Chaucer thus apostrophises:

> "Be favourable eke thou, Polymnia,
> On Parnassus that with thy sisters glad
> By Helicon, and not far from Cirrha,
> Singest with voice memorial in the shade,
> Under the laurel, which that may not fade."

The praises of the Lesbian Poetess have been hymned by bards of all ages. The classic writers of antiquity, cited her as foremost in the power of expressing tender and amatory emotions. Ovid, not only in his "Art of Love," but in his "Heroides," and "De Tristibus," makes allusion to her; and Horace records her pathetic strains, where, in the ode relating his accident from the fall of a tree, he says how near he was to hearing

> "Æoliis fidibus querentem
> Sappho puellis de popularibus;"
>
> ["Sappho plaining on Æolian lute
> Of neighbour maidens mournfully."]

Plutarch quotes, as infallible authority, her description of the tokens by which a passionate lover may be recognized: "those signs which Sappho writeth to be in lovers; to wit: that his words and speech did fail him, his colour became red, his eyes still rolled to and fro, and then a sudden sweat would take him, his pulse would beat fast and rise high; and in the end, that after the force and power of his heart hath failed him, and showed all these signs, he became like a man in an ecstasy and trance, and as white as a kerchief."

That Sappho should have been misunderstood by the vulgar, is only natural; and the later recognition of her excellence by the more discriminating, is in accordance with that law which prohibits immediate appreciation of the finest genius. Shelley discerningly

says:—"Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all spirits on which it falls open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors are fully aware of the excellence of poetry: for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future generations to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and effect in all the strength and splendour of their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging, as he does, to all time, must be composed of his peers: it must be impannelled by Time from the selectest of the wise of many generations. A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness, and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why."

So meagre, and so contradictory are the accounts of Sappho herself, that we can only collect the varying circumstances, and gather from them those most likely to be the truth: but with the one great fact of what she was in spirit,—and which she has bequeathed to the world in the form of undoubted poetic repute,—we can rest content in grateful credence and admiration. One of the chief causes why so little is known with certainty regarding Sappho, is, that there were two women born in the Isle of Lesbos, both named alike. The native place of Sappho, the poetess, was Mitylene; while that of Sappho, the courtesan, was Eresos. The fame of the one, and the infamy of the other, became blended in history, from the identity of name, and from the circumstance of Mitylene and Eresos being towns in the same island. "Sappho, the Lesbian," might apply to either the lady noted for intellectual pursuits, or to the damsel notorious for dissolute pursuits. Moreover, from Sappho

of Mitylene's verse being peculiarly powerful in the expression of amorous sentiment, it might naturally lead to her character becoming mixed, in common report, with that of Sappho of Eresos; for a passionate and poetic temperament is apt to be misunderstood by vulgar and prosaic minds, and to be confounded by them with depravity.

This has probably given rise to popular floating traditions of Sappho's desperate attachment to a youth called Phaon; a name which does not occur in any of her poems that are extant, and which, being one of the appellatives given to Venus's favourite, Adonis, might well have been used by the poetess in passages describing the goddess of Love's addressed to the reluctant object of her flame. Another of the ordinarily received legends respecting Sappho,—and which has been so closely interwoven with her idea, that it is almost impossible to think of her without associating the incident,—is, her having sought extinction for her hapless passion, by throwing herself from the Leucadian rock into the sea. But accumulated evidence,—both positive and negative,—from ancient writers, tends to prove beyond a rational doubt, that Sappho never took the leap from the promontory of Leucadia, which was held to be a sovereign remedy for despairing lovers. They who relate this story of her fail to state whether Sappho lost her life, or survived, after precipitating herself from the rock; and they who omit to relate the incident, have entered into other particulars concerning her, with too much minuteness of detail, not to make their very omission of this one, a tacit evidence of its being untrue. For instance: "Herodotus (who, as Voltaire wittily says, "doesn't *always* lie") goes into a long account of Sappho's addressing a remonstrance to her brother Charaxus, for having given a large sum in the purchase of a female slave called Rhodopis, from her master at Naucratis in Egypt; and speaks of other family cir-

cumstances connected with Sappho: but mentions nothing of the unreturned affection she is supposed to have conceived for Phaon, nor of the leap from the Leucadian rock, which is imagined to have ended her passion and her life. This silence of the "Father of History" respecting two events, which from their importance deserved commemoration, in a recital where he dwells upon much slighter points, seems conclusive that they did not occur to the Sappho of whom he treats,—Sappho of *Mitylene*. Yet the Leucadian leap, with its attributed mystical power of curing hopeless love, was just one of those incidents which Herodotus would have been sure to seize upon,—either for the purpose of making the most of it, or for searching into its origin,—had it occurred to her of whom he speaks. In an elegy written by Hermesianax upon the partialities of celebrated poets, he cites as an example Sappho's liking for Anacreon; but says nothing of her fondness for Phaon. Now, so fatal a prepossession as her supposed fancy for the latter has been represented, together with its catastrophe, would have furnished the most fitting theme possible for elegiac verse, had they actually formed part of the poetess's career. Antipater, of Sidon, composed an epigram relative to Sappho's tomb; yet he not only reverts nowise to her tragical fate at Leucadia, but according to him, her death was a natural one, and a monument was erected to her memory in the place of her birth, where she was buried. The poet Menander positively asserts that Sappho was the first who took the Leucadian leap; but Menander lived at the close of the fourth, and the commencement of the third century before the Christian era. This makes the period of the Sappho's existence, who threw herself from the Leucadian rock, reach as far back as more than three centuries before Christ, but not so far back as five; while the fact that Herodotus, who was in the fifth century, did not record this disastrous end happening to Sappho of Mitylene,

leaves the deduction to be drawn, that in all probability it was Sappho of Eresos who took the Leucadian leap, she not being born when Herodotus wrote.

The facts to be gathered respecting Sappho the poetess, are these. She was born in Mitylene, about 612 B. C. Her father's name has been variously stated to have been Scamandronymus, Symon, Semus, or Etarchus; and her mother's was generally held to be Cleis. Early in life she became the wife of Cercolus, a wealthy and distinguished gentleman of Andros, by whom she had one child, called,—probably in honour of her mother,—Cleis. A few years after her marriage, Sappho became a widow; and it was then that she dedicated herself to the cultivation of her poetic gift. She also strove to distract her sorrow by travelling; and journeyed through continental Greece, where she was much admired and sought after by persons of intelligence. Returning to her native island, she instituted a school of poetry and philosophy; and endeavored to inspire the Lesbian ladies with a taste for intellectual pursuits. Imaginative and ardent natures throw a voluptuous beauty into whatever they undertake; and enter enthusiastically into plans formed with a generous view to improve and refine. Fervour of character is almost always mistaken or misrepresented. The generality do not understand it, and either take it for absurdity or vice:—the envious comprehend it better, but are indignant at it, and represent it as selfishness under the guise of noble feeling. Sappho's warmth of disposition made her eager in all that she did; and eagerness is resented by the ordinary grade of people, who like smooth, commonplace, and easy conventionality. Besides, her attempts to introduce a higher state of cultivation among her people was crowned with a certain amount of success; and success is sure to excite animosity. She numbered among her disciples several illustrious names; and this was not to

be borne tamely by those who smarted beneath a sense of her superior attainments and graces. Sappho, although not handsome, was attractive, as well as gifted,—a perilous combination for a woman, whose consciousness of grace and genius, together with ardour of nature, will not suffer her to remain in obscurity. It is a moral necessity with such beings as Sappho to exercise the qualities with which Heaven has endowed them. They instinctively feel the force of Shakespeare's grand axiom:—

> "If our virtues
> Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
> As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd,
> But to fine issues: nor nature never lends
> The smallest scruple of her excellence,
> But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
> Herself the glory of a creditor,
> Both thanks and use."

Sappho gratefully used Nature's gifts in the noblest way, when she dedicated them to the endeavour of advancing the mental culture of her native Lesbians; and those among them who were most capable of profiting by her efforts, estimated her duly, honouring her as an inspired teacher, an alluring guide, whose feminine charm aided her admirable faculties in leading them to higher elevation and accomplishment. But by the gross-minded, the little-minded, and the grudging-minded, Sappho's attempts to ameliorate the condition of those around her, and to introduce greater refinement in their social pursuits, were construed into vilest meaning, and made the ground of the most odious imputations. Her luxurious enjoyment of Art, her exquisite appreciation of the passion of Love in its matchless beatitude, her intense perception of the loveliness and bliss existing in Poesy and Music as recreations to the spirit, drew upon her the charge of sensuality; and she who strove to exalt her associates, was

accused of seeking to debase them. Either wounded by these injurious calumnies, or,—as some accounts say,—owing to political causes, (being accused by her enemies of complicity with Alcæus in a conspiracy against Pittacus, the governor of Mitylene,) she retired for a time into Sicily. Here the friendship between herself and Anacreon, alluded to by Hermesianax, was supposed to have been formed; but Athenæus maintains that the elegiast was mistaken in believing that Sappho entertained any preference for Anacreon, since, as he asserts, Sappho lived during the time when Alyattes, father to Crœsus, reigned; and Anacreon during that of Cyrus and Polycrates. The well-known rivalry in poetical composition which subsisted between Alcæus and Sappho, each being held by their respective partisans to excel the other in merit, seems to preclude the idea of her being engaged with him in any confederacy or plot. Indeed, so much malice mingles with most that is recorded of Sappho, and so much confusion has arisen from her bearing the same name with a woman of entirely opposite character, that it is difficult to arrive at a correct account of her life. Unfortunately, too, her poems, which obtained her so wide a renown, are little better known to us. Few of them have reached our time; though the majority of her compositions were extant in the age of Horace. They are said to have consisted of nine books, containing a variety of odes, hymns, epithalamia, elegies, epigrams, and other poems. A hymn to Venus, an ode to a friend, and sundry brief fragments, are all that now remain to prove how truly Sappho deserved the admiration bestowed upon her by her contemporaries, and by the writers of antiquity. But these few productions afford sufficient proof of excellence to justify the award of judges who were acquainted with the rest of her works. Feeling, warmth of expression, elegance of diction, felicity of measure, are to be traced in such excellence as to warrant her

being ranked high among lyric poets; and the specimens that exist of her composition, awaken keen regret that the whole should not have been preserved,—not only for their own sake, but because of the insight they would have afforded into particulars of Greek sentiment, as exemplified in the heart-effusions of such a woman as Sappho.

A poetess, who wrote at the opening of the fifteenth century, left a translated fragment from one of Sappho's compositions,—and in the Sapphic Strophe. The antiquated French, gives it a remote air, in accordance with the original antique; and the warmth of Clotilde de Surville's style in expression, assimilates completely with that of the Greek poetess.

"Qu'a mon grè ceste-là va primant sur les dieux !
Qu'enyvre ton soubriz, sur qui ton œil repoze,
Qu'encharment, résonnant de ta bouche de roze,
Les sons mélodieux !

Je t'ai vu—dans mon seyn, Vénus, qu'ay toute en l'ame,
Qui, sur levre embrasée, estouffoit mes accents,
Vénus à feux subtils, mais jus qu'ez os perçants,
Court en fleuves de flame—

S'ennuaigent mes yeulx ; n'oy plus qu'enmy rumeurs ;
Je brusle, je languis ; chauds frissons dans ma vayne
Circulent : je paslis, je palpite, l'haleine
Me manque ; je me meurs.—

["How she, above the rest of Gods, shines beauteous !
How glows thy smile, on whom thine eye reposes ;
How charm, in flowing from thy mouth of roses,
The sounds melodious !

I've felt thee, Venus, in my heart,—to soul it came,—
Stifling my accents on my lips that burn'd,
Venus, with subtle fire, to my very bones return'd
Swift in waves of flame.

Cloud my moist eyes; I hear but murmur'd sigh;
I melt, I languish; hot thrillings in my veins
Fleet through; I pale, I throb, my breathing pains
And fails me;—I die."]

Clotilde de Surville may justly be called the French Sappho, for that intense glow and passionate earnestness which pervade her beautiful verses. The poem to her husband, Bérenger,—a young knight who fought under Charles VII. in the wars against England and Burgundy,—breathes the very soul of conjugal fervour; and the stanzas to her first-born, are instinct with the rapturous delight of a young and proudly happy mother. A little roundel, graced by the most playful and womanly spirit,—half coy, half tender, and wholly charming,—may well be cited here, in an account of Sappho, the love-poetess. The roundel is addressed to Clotilde's favourite friend, Rocca, and tells of a certain stolen kiss. It is headed:—

RONDEL A MA DOULCE MYE ROCCA,

Sur ce que vinct ung soir le bel amy bayzer me desrober à la fontaine.

1422.

Qu'au cler de lune ay déduict, se me voy
Seulette ez bords d'ung crystal de fontaine!
Ung soir y vint mon espoulx et mon roy;
Bayzer m'y prist: ne le sentys qu' à payne,
Et sy pourtant fus-je toute en es moy.

Me courroucIay: n'avoit encor ma foy,
(Si bien mon cœur, car l'eust de prime aubaine;)
Oncques n'ozions nous dire Tu ny Toy,
Qu'au cler de lune.

Done me faschay; puys, comme il se tint coy,
Luy pardonnay; sur ce dict: "O ma rayne!
"N'en coustoit plus d'en prendre une vingtaine,
"Se l'avoy sceu!"—Fayz donc, amy: pourquoy
M'as veu de nuict; n'est tant la faute à moy,
Qu'au cler de lune.

[ROUNDEL, TO MY SWEET FRIEND, ROCCA;

On the handsome lover coming one evening and stealing a kiss from me at the fountain.

1422.

How gladly, by moonlight, I find me alone
By the brink of a fountain's bright crystalline glass!
One eve came my husband, my king, and my own;—
A soft kiss he snatch'd; I felt it scarce pass,
Yet it flutter'd me, ere it was gone.

I pretended to pout:—he wasn't then mine;
(Yet my heart was fast his, from the very first dawn;)
Nor then did we venture to say, "Thou and Thine,"
But by light of the moon.

So, I pouted! then as he kept still
I forgave him—he said: "O my queen!
"I might have ta'en twenty—and twenty I will,—
"Had I known!"—Take them sweetheart; thou'st seen
Me by night time;—the fault's not my ill,
But the light of the moon.]

A short poem, attributed to Sappho, has been rendered into English verse by one who is worthy to be called a sister poetess. She who (if it were only for those exquisite forty-three sonnets of Shakesperian style;—for the tender pathos of her "Caterina and Camoens;" and for the condensed passion of that grand little poem, "A year's spinning,"—a world of emotion in seven stanzas—) richly deserves the title of our modern Sappho,—Elizabeth Barrett Browning, has given us the opportunity of reading this graceful lyric, believed to have been written by the famed Lesbian. There is a Grecian zest, and flush of beauty in the lines, which makes us feel it properly ascribed to Sappho.

SONG OF THE ROSE.

"If Zeus chose us a King of the flowers in his mirth,
He would call to the rose, and would royally crown it;—
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the grace of the earth,
Is the light of the plants that are growing upon it!
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the eye of the flowers,
Is the blush of the meadows that feel themselves fair,—
Is the lightning of beauty, that strikes through the bowers
On pale lovers who sit in the glow unaware.
Ho, the rose breathes of love! ho, the rose lifts the cup
To the red lips of Cypris invoked for a guest!
Ho, the rose having curl'd it's sweet leaves for the world
Takes delight in the motion its petals keep up,
As they laugh to the Wind as it laughs from the west."

Sappho possessed that rare gift,—genius. She merited the names bestowed upon her, of "Tenth Muse," and "Divine Poetess;" not merely because she was accomplished in writing poetry, but because she was endowed with creative faculty. She had invention, and originality of resource. Her love of Poesy inspired her with power to add fresh beauty to the anthology of Greece; composing in metres of her own design, and devising a peculiar versification, named after her, the Sapphic Strophe; a metrical construction which has been frequently imitated in ancient and modern times. Horace has many Odes in the Sapphic Strophe, the ode to Augustus Cæsar (the second in the first Book) being one. It consists of three verses, and a fourth (of two feet), termed the Adonic verse.

Sappho's ear in rhythmical construction, and her passion for music, enabled her to carry her creative genius into that art also; for Aristoxenus affirms, that to Sappho must be assigned the honour of having invented Mixolydian harmony, so well adapted for the expression of tragic and serious feeling. She is also said to have

been the inventor of more than one new instrument, and of the plectrum, or quill with which lyres were struck, in sounding their strings.

In Sappho, Milton's

> "Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
> Wed their divine sounds;"

And, "to our high-rais'd phantasy present" an image of blended Art dedicated to pæans in honour of Love, that deity whose own utterance is

> "Sweet and musical
> As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair."

After her death, divine honours were paid her; altars and temples were raised to her memory, and her fame spread far and wide. Sicily erected a statue to her; and the inhabitants of her native Mitylene stamped Sappho's image on their coin. This tardy tribute from those who had maligned her, savoured of anxiety to claim reflected honour from her having been born among them, although they could not properly estimate her while she lived among them; but posthumous appreciation brought credit on themselves, where value during her existence, swelled her triumphs only. Dead excellence and prosperity are more readily forgiven and acknowledged, than while flourishing in health, strength and beauty. Sappho's fair name was blackened at a period when her heart still beat with power to feel proud of eulogium, or hurt by opprobrium; but when cold to repute or injury alike, popularity crowned her ashes, and Envy joined in heaping garlands upon one whom it had vilified. Great spirits must be content to draw breath amid vulgar detraction, and to have plaudits clamoured over their grave.

Sappho is a shining exemplar of glowing womanhood, and high genius moulded into that "bright particular star" of humanity—a Poetess.

LUCRETIA.

Lucretia is a world-renowned type of conjugal faith and chastity. She impersonates Roman matron purity, unable to survive outraged self-respect. Lucretia was the daughter of Spurious Lucretius Tricipitinus; and was married to Lucius Collatinus, a member of the reigning royal family in Rome. Collatinus's relationship to the Tarquins could not preserve him from the injuries of one of its scions; while it ultimately caused his own downfal. Through his wife, Lucretia, he was the victim of Tarquin treachery; in his own person he became a sufferer from Tarquin hatred,—the hatred borne by the people towards the Tarquin race. This wicked brood were signal in crime. Tullia, utterly devoid of womanhood, had taken her sister's husband in marriage, after murdering her own; had instigated the assassination of her father for the attaining of his crown; and had summed her filial infamy by driving her chariot wheels over her parent's scarce-dead body. Tarquin, surnamed Superbus,—from his insolence of pride,—wielded the sceptre he had gained by blood with tyranny and injustice. To stifle the murmurs of the people at his extravagant and reckless expenditure of the public treasury, he engaged his subjects in war. Sextus Tarquin combined those qualities that the son of such a father might naturally inherit. Self-willed, sensual, treach-

erous, and cruel, he hesitated at no deed that might secure the gratification of his own evil passions. The history of the period, as related by Livy,—and poetically told by Ovid,—forcibly pourtrays the character of all those connected with the sad tale of Lucretia's wrongs, besides recording the black event which forms the small but fatal amount of what we know concerning herself.

Tarquinius Superbus, being at war upon Gabii, a Volscian city, the youngest of his three sons, Sextus, made his way into the enemy's camp; and when their swords were raised to destroy him, bade them strike, saying that it would obtain them favour with his barbarous father, who had maltreated and discarded him. He stripped his back to show them evidences of his father's ill-usage, in the lacerations which he himself, with crafty device, had purposely inflicted there. The foes, seeing the young man's condition (Ovid, here, has a beautiful picturesque touch of its being moonlight in the camp, and revealing the scars), returned their swords to the scabbard, commiserated him, bade him stay with them, and take arms in their ranks. The impostor, rejoicing in their simplicity, accepted the offer; and when he found his credit among them confirmed, he despatched a trusty messenger to his father, inquiring how he might best place Gabii within his power. The message was delivered to the king, who returned no answer, but walked up and down his garden, as if in reverie, striking off the heads of the tallest flowers (Livy says "poppies,"—Ovid, "lilies") with a switch he held in his hand. The man went back, recounting that the king had spoken no word, and repeating what he had seen. The wily son perceived the meaning of the wily father. He immediately put to death the principal men in Gabii; and the city, deprived of its chiefs, opened its gates to the Romans.

King Tarquin proceeded with his extravagant outlay in Rome.

But in the midst of these costly works, an ominous event occurred which inspired universal fear. A serpent, issuing from a column of wood, spread consternation amongst the inhabitants of the palace, and put them to flight. The king, at first but little alarmed, conceived nevertheless serious uneasiness respecting the future. The Etruscan soothsayers were usually consulted with regard to those presages which threatened public welfare; but this one, seeming to menace his own family, Tarquinius Superbus resolved to consult the oracle of Delphos, celebrated throughout the world. At the same time, doubtful what might be the answer of the god, he dared not confide to strangers the charge of going to receive it; he therefore sent two of his sons into Greece, across lands then unknown, and over seas even more unknown. The princes, Titus and Aruns, set forth, accompanied by the son of Tarquinia, sister to the king,—Lucius Junius Brutus,—who was of a very different character, in reality, to what he professed to be in public. Aware that the leading men in the state,—his own near relatives among others,—had fallen victims to the sanguinary oppression of Tarquinius Superbus, this young man adopted the course, thenceforth, of allowing nothing to appear either in his character or fortune which might give umbrage to the tyrant, or excite his cupidity; in a word, he sought from the contempt of those around him that security which justice afforded not. He feigned to be half-witted, suffering himself to become the laughing-stock of the king, abandoning all his possessions to his disposal, and accepting the opprobrious surname of Brutus. It was under favor of this title, indicative of brutish incapacity, that the future liberator of Rome awaited the accomplishment of his destiny. Taken to Delphos by the young Tarquins,—of whom he was rather the plaything than the companion,—he carried with him a staff of camel-wood, made hollow, and enclosing a wand of gold, which he presented as his

offering at the shrine of the god. This offering mysteriously emblemed his own character; at the same time that it served his purpose of shrouding the richness of the gift from curious eyes, and concealing his homage to the oracle under the guise of a senseless deed. Arrived at the Delphic goal, the young princes, after fulfilling their father's behest, had the curiosity to endeavour to ascertain which among them was destined to succeed to the throne of Rome. It is asserted that a voice replied from the depths of the sanctuary: "He among you, O young men, will attain to sovereign power, who first shall kiss his mother." Titus and Aruns, anxious lest their brother Sextus should anticipate them, agreed to keep the answer of the oracle a secret, and prepared to hasten back; but Brutus, interpreting otherwise the words of the Pythian sentence, pretended to stumble, and kissed the Earth,—common mother of all mankind.

On their return to Rome, they found great preparations going on for war against the Rutuli. The capital of the dominions of the Rutuli was the city of Ardea; and their nation was both rich and powerful. War was declared against this people on account of the financial exhaustion occasioned by the costly works undertaken by king Tarquin, who sought to supply the deficiency in the public treasury, and at the same time to gain, through their love of booty, the liking of his subjects. For the Romans, fretting beneath his arrogance and despotism, resented his having held them so long in labours of artisans and slaves. At first, an attempt was made to carry Ardea by assault; but the endeavour was unsuccessful. The siege took the form of a blockade; and the enemy was driven within the walls. During this blockade, as frequently happens in the course of a war, less fierce than prolonged, furloughs were readily granted—although rather to the officers than to the soldiers. From

time to time, the young princes relieved the tedium of idleness by banquets, and parties of festive debauchery.

One day, when they were all supping with Sextus Tarquin—Lucius Collatinus being among the guests,—the conversation chanced to fall upon their wives; and each of the company pronounced an eulogium upon his own wife, as deserving the palm of excellence. The discussion growing warmer, Collatinus said there was no occasion for so many words, as in a few hours they might prove how completely his wife, Lucretia, surpassed all others. "If we be young and vigorous," added he, "let us mount on horseback, and go and assure ourselves of the merits of our wives. As they do not expect us, we can judge them by the occupations in which we find them engaged, when we take them by surprise."

Well may Shakespeare observe, at this portion of the story:—

"Collatine unwisely did not let *
To praise the clear unmatched red and white,
Which triumph'd in that sky of his delight;
Where mortal stars, as bright as heaven's beauties,
With pure aspects did him peculiar duties.

For he the night before in Tarquin's tent,
Unlock'd the treasure of his happy state;
What priceless wealth the heavens had him lent
In the possession of his beauteous mate;
Reckoning his fortune at such high proud rate,
That kings might be espoused to more fame,
But king nor peer to such a peerless dame.

Beauty itself doth of itself persuade
The eyes of men without an orator;
What needeth, then, apologies be made
To set forth that which is so singular?
Or why is Collatine the publisher
Of that rich jewel he should keep unknown
From thievish ears, because it is his own?"

* forbear.

The history goes on to relate that, heated by wine, their young bloods fermenting with mingled excess and excitement, the company accepted the husband's rash challenge. "Let us go!" they exclaimed with one accord; and away they rode at full speed to Rome. They arrived there about nightfall. From thence they went on to Collatia; where they found the king's daughters-in-law with their young companions deep in the enjoyment of a sumptuous repast. Lucretia, on the contrary, was discovered in her private apartment, spinning wool, and employed amidst her women, at a late hour of the night. Lucretia was awarded all the honors of the challenged comparison. She received with courtesy the young Tarquins and her husband; who, proud of his victory, invited the princes to remain with him. Then it was, that Sextus Tarquin conceived the infamous desire to obtain possession of Lucretia, even were it at the price of crime. Besides her modest beauty, which kindled his unholy flame, her reputation for stainless virtue excited his vanity, and inspired him with double incentive to attempt the triumph over this admirable woman; and it is to be observed,—as a proof of Lucretia's character for invincible purity,—that Tarquin never once entertained any other idea than that of prevailing by force. He knew that persuasion or seduction were hopeless. After finishing the night in diversions befitting their age, the young men returned to the camp.

Some few days afterwards, Sextus, unknown to Collatinus, returned to Collatia, accompanied by a single attendant. As his designs were suspected by no one, he was welcomed with kindness; both on account of his royal rank, and as being a kinsman of Collatinus, the master of the house. After supper, he was conducted to the apartment prepared for him; where, burning with illicit passion, he impatiently awaited the retirement of the household to rest. At length, judging by the silence which prevailed,

that all were asleep, he drew his sword, and crept to the bedside of Lucretia, whom he found in a deep slumber. Placing his hand heavily upon her bosom to prevent her stirring, he hoarsely whispered:—"Silence, Lucretia! I am Sextus. My sword is in my hand; and you die if you breathe one word." Lucretia, awakened abruptly out of sleep, dumb with terror, defenceless, beholds death impending over her, and hears Tarquin pouring forth his insults of passionate declaration; pressing, beseeching, threatening, by turns, and conjuring her by all he deems most capable of moving a woman's heart.

But finding that she only became the more confirmed in resolution and resistance, and that even the fear of death could not shake her constancy, he tried to alarm her fears for her reputation. He protested, that after having killed her, he would place beside her dead body that of a murdered slave, in order to make it believed that she had been stabbed in the act of adulterous sin. Vanquished by this horrible dread, the inflexible chastity of Lucretia yielded to the brutality of Tarquin; and he, proud of his ignominious triumph, departed back to the camp. Lucretia, overwhelmed by the magnitude of her misfortune, sent a messenger to Rome and to Ardea, to entreat her father and her husband would hasten to her, each accompanied by a sure friend, as a fearful event had occurred which demanded their immediate presence.

Spurius Lucretius came with Publius Valerius; and Collatinus, with Brutus. The two latter were returning to Rome in company, when they were met by Lucretia's messenger. They found her seated in her apartment, attired in mourning weeds, and plunged in the profoundest grief. On the appearance of her friends, she burst into tears; and upon her husband's eager questioning as to the cause of her agitation, she brokenly recounted the irreparable wrong and misery that had befallen them both.

Refusing all comfort, and all attempt to persuade her that she was virtually innocent, since her will had taken no part in the foul deed committed, she drew a dagger from beneath her robe, stabbed it to her heart, and dropped expiring at the feet of her husband and father.

While they, stricken with dismay, abandoned themselves to their grief, Brutus drew forth from her bleeding bosom the reeking dagger, and holding it aloft, exclaimed:—"Hear me swear, O ye gods!—and you, friends, bear me witness!—I swear by this innocent blood,—so pure before the outrage it received from this hateful son of kings! I swear, to pursue with fire and with steel, with all means in my power, the haughty Tarquin, his guilty wife, his infamous son, his whole hateful race, and to endure no kings in Rome—neither these, nor any other!" He then gave the dagger into the hands of Collatinus, of Lucretius, and of Valerius; all of them amazed at this marvellous change in a man hitherto regarded among them as half-witted. They repeated the prescribed vow to extirpate the accursed Tarquin race; and, passing at once from grief to thoughts of vengeance, they followed Brutus, who called them forth to the immediate destruction of royalty in Rome. They bore the dead body of Lucretia with them into the public place of the city; where,—as they expected,—this eloquent spectacle, in its bleeding evidence of the ruthless violence and outrage of the king's son, excited universal horror and indignation.

> "To see sad sights moves more than hear them told;
> For then the eye interprets to the ear
> The heavy motion that it doth behold,
> When every part a part of woe doth bear."

Lucretia's hapless fate sealed the fate of the Tarquins, and with it, that of the regal dynasty. The expulsion of the reigning family was followed by the election of Brutus and Collatinus to consular

power; and an annual consulship was substituted for monarchical government.

When Lucius Junius Brutus died, funeral honors were publicly paid him. The senators, whom Brutus had raised in number to three hundred, came to receive his body at the gates of the city, it being brought to Rome from the field of battle; and the Roman matrons wore a year's mourning for him, as the avenger of Lucretia. His statue was erected in the Capitol, bearing in the hand a dagger.

Sextus Tarquin was not long subject either to the stings of remorse, or to the reproaches of his family for being the cause of their downfal. He retired to the city of Gabii, where he held command; and perished there soon after.

Lucretia's death took place in the year 244 of the Roman era, —509 B. C.

This narrative of Lucretia, has, of course, closely adhered to the historical account; but it is interesting to trace the different representations of her speech and demeanour—at the point in her sad story where her husband and friends come to her on the morning after the outrage—as variously given by those who have depicted the scene. Livy, with the staidness of a historian, and the patriotic bent of a Roman, records the address of the Roman matron, Lucretia, to her husband, in words which convey the idea that she seeks to urge his indignation to take the shape of revenge upon her undoer, to turn her wrongs into a means of redressing those of Rome; and while pleading her cause with her injured friends, inciting them to make it one with that of the oppressed Romans, groaning beneath Tarquin tyranny. She seems, in this writer's pages, less occupied with the horror and pain of the revelation she has to make, than solicitous to convert it into a source of future avenging retribution. She brings forward—

almost with unfeminine coolness—the circumstances that may be pleaded in extenuation of her unhappy fall; and receives the consoling assurances of her husband and friends,—that as her will had no part in the foul deed, she cannot be accounted culpable,—more like arguments that require answering, than soothings of her affliction. Upon their telling her that when the spirit is innocent, the body is guiltless, and that there can be no fault committed where the intention remains pure, she replies, "It is for you to decide upon the doom of Sextus. For myself, if I absolve myself from crime, I cannot exempt myself from the penalty. Henceforth, no woman surviving her shame, shall venture to cite the example of Lucretia!" And she forthwith plunges the steel into her bosom, and dies.

Ovid has told the whole story, in the second book of his "Fasti," with great beauty and tenderness. At the point in question, he describes her silence, her confusion, her troubled aspect; her hidden face, her streaming tears, her hesitation and distress in having to relate the circumstances which she has summoned her husband and father to hear. He has given to their words a manly belief in the goodness of her they love, a noble confidence in her faith and virtue. "Thou hast not failed in truth or purity!" they exclaim; "thou yieldedst to violence!" And to her speech he has imparted a womanly tenderness, very characteristic of her modest worth,—gentle, yet firm and constant to her own conviction of right: "You pardon me!" she returns, "but I,—I cannot pardon myself!" And she falls, self-struck, at their feet.

Chaucer has a similar touch, here, with the Latin poet; indeed his "Legend of Lucrece," is, all through, almost a paraphrase of many of the passages in Ovid. The touch adverted to, is strictly in keeping with the character of the chaste Lucretia, marking her

scrupulous modesty in the very last act of her dying moments. The old Saxon poet tells it in his own quaintly simple style :—

" But privily she caughten forth a knife,
And therewithal she reft herself of life,
And as she fell adown, she cast her look,
And of her clothés yet good heed she took;
For in her falling, yet she had a care,
Lest that her feet or suché things lay bare;—
So well she lovèd cleanness, and eke truth."

Chaucer's description of her manner when faltering out the terrible revelation she has to make to her husband and friends, forms also a graceful parallel with Ovid's diction; but, as usual, Shakespeare transcends them all, in his wording of the circumstance. The pathos, the delicacy, the bashful reluctance, the wifely and impassioned regret *for his sake*, which Shakespeare has thrown into Lucretia's speech to Collatinus are completely his own.

" And now this pale swan in her watery nest
Begins the sad dirge of her certain ending:
(Few words), quoth she, shall fit the trespass best,
Where no excuse can give the fault amending:
In me more woes than words are now depending,
And my laments would be drawn out too long,
To tell them all with one poor tired tongue.

Then, be this all the task it hath to say:
Dear husband, in the interest of thy bed
A stranger came, and on that pillow lay
Where thou wast wont to rest thy weary head;
And what wrong else may be imagined
By foul enforcement might be done to me,
From that, alas! thy Lucrece is not free."

In this early poem of the great dramatist, he faintly anticipated some of those exquisite touches which afterwards shone forth with such refulgence in his glorious play of Cymbeline. We are

reminded of Posthumus Leonatus's rash wager, in Collatine's boast and challenge; of Imogen's fervent-chaste wifehood, in Lucretia's modest dignity; and of Iachimo's turpitude in Sextus Tarquin's villainy. Shakespeare, like his brother poets, Ovid and Chaucer, told the story with full homage to the mingled beauty and delicacy of the real Lucretia; but there is one subtle point, which perhaps only the painter of Imogen would have thought of adding. When Sextus first arrives:—

> "He stories to her ears her husband's fame,
> Won in the fields of fruitful Italy;
> And decks with praises Collatine's high name,
> Made glorious by his manly chivalry,
> With bruised arms and wreaths of victory:
> Her joy with heav'd up hand she doth express,
> And wordless so greets heaven for his sueeess."

The instinct which induces even the intended violator to make his first appeal to the wife through her husband's praises, is precisely one of the thousand instances of Shakespeare's keen perception of human sentiment; while Lucretia's silent drinking in of the joy, with devout exaltation of heart, is true Imogen. Afterwards, too, when Tarquin, alone, admiringly recalls her beauteous looks and manner, how vividly he depicts the innocent unconsciousness of Lucretia; reading no hint of the unlawful fire that flames in his eyes, and seeing nothing there save interest, as she thinks, for him she loves.

> "Quoth he, she took me kindly by the hand,
> *And gaz'd for tidings in my eager eyes,*
> Fearing some hard news from the warlike band,
> Where her beloved Collatinus lies.
> O how her fear did make her colour rise!
> First red as roses that on lawn we lay,
> Then white as lawn, the roses took away."

The two stanzas pourtraying Lucretia as she lies asleep, so beautifully prefigure the similar passage describing Imogen, that the poet himself seems reminded of his own former-written picture; for he makes the Italian Iachimo commence the lovely speech with these words:—

> "*Our Tarquin thus*
> Did softly press the rushes, ere he waken'd
> The chastity he wounded.—Cytherea,
> How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! fresh lily,
> And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!
> But kiss; one kiss!—Rubies unparagon'd
> How dearly they do't!—'Tis her breathing that
> Perfumes the chamber thus: the flame o' the taper
> Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids
> To see the enclosed lights, now canopied
> Under these windows; white and azure, lac'd
> With blue of heaven's own tinct."

And here is Lucretia:—

> Her lily hand her rosy cheek lies under,
> Cozening the pillow of a lawful kiss,
> Who, therefore angry, seems to part in sunder
> Swelling on either side to want his bliss,
> Between whose hills her head intombed is;
> Where, like a virtuous monument, she lies,
> To be admir'd of lewd unhallowed eyes.
>
> Without the bed her other fair hand was,
> On the green coverlet; whose perfect white
> Show'd like an April daisy on the grass,
> With pearly sweat, resembling dew of night.
> Her eyes, like marigolds, had sheath'd their light,
> And canopied in darkness sweetly lay,
> Till they might open to adorn the day.

The subject has inspired Ovid with a delicacy of description unusual to him. Those passages in which he describes Lucretia's personal demeanour, are signalized by refined beauty and grace of

womanhood. The one, for instance, where Collatinus brings the young men to his home, and finds the wife among her women, spinning wool, which is to make a garment for her absent husband. She hastens them at their work, asking news of the war, and half deploring her Collatinus's bravery, which ever leads him into the thickest of the danger. At the thought of his peril, her heart turns cold, and she breaks off, weeping at the image her own fears have conjured up.

[" Desinit in lacrymas, intentaque fila remittet,
In gremio vultum deposuitque suum.
Hoc ipsum decuit: lacrymæ decuere pudicam;
Et facies animo dignaque parque fuit.
Pone metum, venio, conjux ait: illa revixit;
Deque viri collo, dulce pependit onus."

[A version of which may be thus ventured:—

In tears, she ceased: th' extended threads lie slack;
Her gentle face upon her bosom droops;
Her very grief's a grace: those wifely tears
Beam chastity,—that look, her lofty soul.
'Lay by your fear; I come!' the husband cried:—
To joy restor'd, on Collatinus' neck
She flung the burthen soft of love and welcome.]

And again, in the crisis of her calamity, Ovid thus depicts her helpless innocence:—

[" Illa nihil: neque enim vocem, viresque loquendi
Aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet.
Sed tremit, ut quondam stabulis deprensa relictis
Parva sub infesto quum jacet agna lupo:
Quid faciat? Pugnet? vincetur femina pugnet:
Clamet? at in dextra, qui necet, ensis adest:
Effugiet? positis regentur pectoris palmis,
Nunc primum externa pectora tacta manu."

[She, mute: nor voice, nor power to speak one word;
No conscious force throughout her soul prevails:
But trembling lay, as lambkin stray'd from fold,
That falls beneath the fangs of ravening wolf.
What do? Contend? A woman fails in strife.
Cry out? The sword is there at hand to slay.
Escape? Her bosom's held by ruffian clutch;
That bosom now first soil'd by alien hand.]

Lucretia is one of those women of whom little is known; and of whom nothing would be known, were it not for the single point in her fate—its catastrophe. But in that solitary fact, how much is revealed. It shows forth the lustrous chastity, which, but for that remorseless assault, would have been content, like all modest virtue, to remain unasserted,—claiming no merit for its existence, satisfied with its simple possession as a part of womanhood. Sir Thomas Browne says:—"Who knows whether the best of men be known? And among women, such distinction is even more doubtful; since it is the peculiar privilege of the best womanly virtue to remain untrumpeted." Lucretia's chary regard for honor is no more than that which exists in every woman's heart; and she, like the rest of her sex worthy the name of women, would gladly have treasured it secretly, instead of being compelled to declare it openly, had her destiny so permitted. The writer just quoted, remarks:—"Happy are they whom privacy makes innocent; and Lucretia would have been happy, had she been able to preserve her innocence privately and quietly. But, indignation that the ideal of virtue enthroned within her soul should be desecrated, resentment that her husband's honor should be defiled in her person, and abhorrence of herself when she deemed her purity impaired, drove her from her peaceful silence, and she felt compelled to vindicate her reverence for conjugal chastity, by an act that at once immortalized her wrongs, and her own keen sense of them.

When we consider the age in which Lucretia lived,—five centuries before Christianity had shed its elevating influence upon the world,—the delicacy of her character, and the refinement of her conduct, strike us as pre-eminently beautiful. In times when rapine and violence of all kinds were mercilessly enacted, when the forcible and treacherous seizure of the Sabine women formed but one signal instance among many a similar act of outrage committed during incessant wars and sackings of cities,—the noble self-respect of Lucretia wears an aspect of singular dignity. The sense she entertained of her injury, the mode in which she sent for her husband and father to reveal it to them, and the self-immolation with which she expiated the dishonour they had sustained, all bespeak a sentiment and refined course of action rare indeed in those periods. And yet, the way in which Lucretia's memory has been more than once dealt with, affords a lamentable instance of the strange misconception, and unjust misconstruction from which the fairest and purest of humanity have not been exempt. It might be thought that the chaste rectitude of this virtuous-hearted woman, must have ensured its own clear comprehension, and honest representation; but on the contrary, her conduct has been both misinterpreted and mis-stated. St. Augustin, and others, have not scrupled to assail Lucretia with indecent sneers; making her a butt for the shafts they level at paganism, in her person. Well may Bayle indignantly observe:—"The reflections cast upon Lucretia by some writers, are not only tasteless jests, but frivolous quibbles of sophistry. Her yielding to Tarquin, when he threatened to kill the slave and place him beside her dead body, has been twisted into an accusation that she preferred maintaining the semblance of virtue, to preserving virtue, that she sacrificed honor for the sake of keeping reputation, and that good name was dearer to her than chastity itself. Her self-inflicted death, too, has been

treated as a crime,—judging it by quite other standards of religion and morality than those which regulated men's belief in the time of Lucretia. It seems impossible that such distorted views of her character and behaviour could be other than wilful misapprehension. Surely, for the terrible fear that took possession of Lucretia, when no dread of immediate death to herself could subdue her firmness of resistance, there might be found a far more powerful motive than the merely selfish anxiety for reputation. It was her pang of conviction that she must live dishonoured in her husband's belief,—that he would have no chance of learning the truth,—that he would never know in what unbroken faith and love to him she had died, that she would be found in in such plight as left no possibility of Collatinus thinking her innocent,—which deprived her of all power longer to resist. She could not—no chaste wife could—afford to dwell in a husband's remembrance a thing so fallen. Rather trust to his generous confidence in the unswerving fidelity of her spirit, while revealing to him the loathed subjugation of her too-weak frame; and avenge for him, by her own death, the destruction of his peace and honor. The way in which her father and husband both received the account of the cruel event she had to relate, shows the esteem in which her single-minded character was held by them, and the thorough reliance they had upon her known unspotted truth. They were the first to assure her that she was innocent in their eyes; they knew her pure heart, and firm faith. Upon her avowal, they felt at once—knowing her virtue and strong love for them—that she *could not* have voluntarily yielded; and that she must have been a mere passive victim of brute violence. They had no unworthy suspicions of the integrity of her motives; they knew it was honour,—honour itself,—and reputation as part of honour, that were dear to her, for their sakes even more than for her

own ; and posterity has no right to judge this noble-spirited woman less candidly than those manly hearts who knew, loved, trusted, and lost her.

To sully the glory of Lucretia with scurril insinuations, is to act the Tarquin by her memory. Lucretia ought not to be despoiled of the radiant crown of chastity which encircles her white brow in the thoughts of succeeding generations.

ASPASIA.

The great characteristic of Aspasia was intellect. Her powers of mind permitted her to take rank among men; and she used her qualities of womanhood but as a means to bring her into men's companionship. She lived among men, she thought with men; she was a man herself, in every particular but those attractions of her sex which gave her additional influence in winning men to share their intellect, their confidence, and their liking with her.

At a time when much social license prevailed in the ties appointed to sanctify the intercourse between men and women, and when, also, much social injustice prevailed in the legal disabilities to which foreign-born women were subject in Athens, it is hardly to be wondered at, if considerable latitude in morals obtained among the women of that period. A native of Ionia, Aspasia partook of the soft Asiatic temperament; which, blended with her virile mind, made her view with masculine indifference those restraints of inclination which generally form an integral part of womanhood. Her youth was as devoid of strictness as that of the many young men, whose early conduct is leniently spoken of as folly, indiscreet fondness for pleasure, and "sowing wild oats."

Aspasia was born in the city of Miletus; and was the daughter of Axiochus. The year of her birth is not recorded, but it

may be placed somewhere about 480 B. C. She adopted as her model, a certain Thargelia, a celebrated courtezan, whose political and literary talents, combined with personal beauty, had enabled her to obtain a position of considerable influence in the state. This Thargelia confined her favours to the highest personages, and chief rulers of her time; and being not only extremely handsome but possessing the art of allurement in a surpassing degree, she succeeded in establishing an intimacy with the greatest men in Greece, which she converted into a means of winning them to the interests of the king of Persia. Aspasia, with her commanding intellect, and that defective moral discipline which arose out of the circumstances stated, came to Athens with the intention of cultivating the friendship of those Grecians pre-eminent in genius and intelligence, and associating with them on terms of freedom and equality. The Athenian articles of faith in the philosophy of existence made it almost a duty to luxuriate in life to intoxication. With them, indeed, "to enjoy is to obey," formed a tenet of their social creed; and fully did they yield it observance. The voluptuous ease of their repasts,—reclining on couches as they fed; the cost, the lavishness, and the exquisiteness of their viands; the rareness of their wines, and the immoderate quantities in which they indulged; the profusion of flowers and garlands with which they heaped their goblets and themselves at their feasts; the sensuous appreciation of Art; and the sensual avidity of pleasure, all mark the Greek desire to taste of life to inebriation. Alcibiades, reeling in at the banquet of Plato, attended by flute-players, "crowned with a thick crown of ivy and violets, and having a quantity of fillets on his head, led forward, and placed against the door-post, excessively drunk, and roaring out," excites no disgust in his friends, but is welcomed among them with laughter and delight. Finding no goblet large enough, he takes a wine-cooler, holding

eight cups, has it filled; drinks it off; has it re-filled; and passes it to Socrates, who empties the draught; and another of the company observes:—"Shall we then have no conversation or singing over our cups, but drink down stupidly, just as if we were thirsty?" This gusto of debauchery, mixing intelligence with indulgence, and blending sense with gratification of the senses, is peculiarly Greek, and belongs to that Athenian society in which Aspasia figured. Excess, so far from being a reproach, was an accomplishment. It was an evidence of constitutional strength and refinement in taste. At this very Platonic banquet, the majority of the revellers remain till cock-crow; some sleeping on their couches as they lay; others deep-engaged in discussion. Aristophanes, Agathon, and Socrates "sat it out, and were still drinking out of a great goblet, which they passed round and round; Socrates disputing between them, on the foundations of the tragic and comic Arts being essentially the same."

The Cynic and the Stoic philosophers had their teachers and their disciples; but the Epicurean philosophy ruled in that social assemblage where Aspasia was the centre of attraction. Her strong natural capacity, and her high acquirements, joined to a fascinating manner, made her the admired of all who saw her; and her house soon became the resort of all the men of note in Athens. Socrates, with his friends, visited her; and it is said that he was her pupil in the art of eloquence, which she taught. The elegiac poet, Hermesianax, represents Socrates as enamoured of Aspasia; and says, that, "Venus, avenging herself for his sage austerity, inflamed him with a passion for the gifted Ionian; so that his profound wisdom occupied itself thenceforth in the frivolous cares and anxieties of love. He perpetually invented fresh pretexts for repairing to Aspasia's house; and he, who had unravelled the truth from the most tortuous sophisms, could not find

the clue to the windings of his own heart." That Socrates was one of her admirers, there is no doubt; he, in common with the host of discerning men who flourished at that period, courted her notice. Alcibiades also was among her guests; and it is a significant circumstance, as illustrative of the social code with regard to morals and manners then prevailing in their city, that the Athenians who frequented her house brought their wives with them to hear her discourse. She was an accomplished mistress of oratory; her usual talk was distinguished by noble expressions, and an original turn of thought. Grand ideas clothed in harmonious language, was a faculty pertaining to Greek utterance. The conversation at Aspasia's was instinct with intelligential beauty; fine in sentiment, flowing in speech, earnest in opinion, graceful and eloquent in diction. The ease, combined with refinement, perspicacity, and artistic charm, of the friendly intellectual meetings at her house, were such as to render access to them a coveted privilege.

Among those who were foremost in availing themselves of this desired gratification was Pericles. He, like the rest, was struck with Aspasia's brilliant mental endowments. Himself a fine orator, he perfected his style under her auspices. Himself a governor, he studied government, aided by her enlightened views, and acute penetration. He was one of those men, not afraid to believe that his own manly strength of understanding could be yet farther invigorated by womanly assistance. Pericles had just one of those natures which,—haughty and reserved with fellow-men, can unbend if it discover a congenial-minded woman; and which, with large liberality, not only generously receives this feminine sympathy, but generously yields it full measure of acknowledgment. Pericles eagerly sought the support which he felt that his vigorous intellect attained in the opinions and counsels of Aspasia; he gladly availed

himself of the energetic firmness which her woman's spirit added to his robust judgment. The female mind has frequently a keenness in perception, and an almost instinctive quickness of foresight, which, consociated with masculine calmness and staidness of wisdom, forms an all-potent combination of intellectual might. Pericles, from perceiving this point of reliance afforded him by Aspasia's mental capacity, grew to lean upon it with that pleasant feeling of security, which, in such a man's breast, produces increased liking. A merely *clever* man, upon discovering that a woman assists his judgment, resents her ability, and dislikes herself; a man of high mind and true genius, becomes attached in proportion as he finds corresponding qualities in the woman he prefers.

Pericles,—while seeking the society of Aspasia, as a brilliant and accomplished person who could enliven his social hours with her wit and information, improve his intellectual hours by her powers of oratory and knowledge of governmental and state affairs, and beguile his hours of recreation by her taste in Art, and personal fascination,—learned to love her for herself. His love became confirmed and genuine; it became that higher kind of attachment, founded on esteem for individual qualities, and increased into passionate and exclusive preference, which is not content with mere casual connection, but which desires the bonds of wedded union to ensure its permanence. Plato says:—"They who are inspired by this divinity (the Uranian Venus) seek the affections of those who are endowed by nature with greater excellence and vigour both of body and mind. And it is easy to distinguish those who especially exist under the influence of this power, by their choosing in early youth, as the objects of their love, those in whom the intellectual faculties have begun to develope. For they who begin to love in this manner, seem to me to be preparing to pass their whole life together in community of good and evil, and

not ever lightly deceiving those who love them to be faithless to their vows."

The love of Pericles for Aspasia, springing from this blended predilection for her accomplished intellect, and affection for her attractive graces, could no longer be satisfied with possessing her as the occasional companion of his lighter moments; he wished to make her his own for life,—to have her constantly by his side, during the remainder of his existence. He had been married to a kinswoman, a widow, formerly the wife of Hipponicus, by whom she had one child, named Callias; but neither Pericles nor she caring for each other, they mutually agreed to be divorced, and they were thus set free. Pericles gave her, by her own wish, to another husband; and he himself immediately espoused the woman of his choice, Aspasia. Plutarch records, in his "Life of Pericles," that, so dearly loved was Aspasia by Pericles, that he never went out, or returned home, without saluting her with a kiss. The biographer adds, that this conjugal caress brought many sneers from the comedy-writers of the time, who were mighty facetious, and even scurrilous, upon it. But Pericles, like all great men, had many enemies, and they would not let slip any occasion of wounding one, whom they dared not attack directly, through the person of those dear to him.

This recorded act of the husband, attesting the continuance and quiet fulness of his joy in her whom he had made his wedded partner, is a comprehensive answer to the malignant attacks upon Aspasia's character, which the comic-writers of the time took delight in showering upon her. There is not the slightest ground for believing that she failed in the most perfect truth and faith to Pericles, when once she became his. And, moreover, there is upon record a sentence of hers (quoted as related by Æschines, a disciple of Socrates), which gives evidence of her possessing a true insight

into what constitutes the fit basis for married union. On an occasion when Aspasia was seeking to effect a reconciliation between Xenophon and his wife, she wound up her exordium by this argument:—"From the moment that you have answered to yourself this question, that there is not upon earth a better man or more loveable woman, learn to recognize and enjoy this happiness which is mutually allotted yours,—you, to be husband to the best of women, you, to be wife to the best of men."

Had Aspasia been a gross, or depraved woman, she could never have inspired the reliant fondness,—even the tenderly calm and confiding attachment, of which Pericles' behaviour to her gives evidence. But his own character was precisely one to provoke the hostile feeling of inferior natures. His commanding abilities created envy even while they inspired respect; and his proud spirit awakened resentment while compelling involuntary allegiance. The whole man is visible to us, in Plutarch's animated account of him. The description of his manner is precisely that of a haughtily self-concentrated disposition—exteriorly sedate from inward elevation. Thus: "He grew not only to have a great mind and an eloquent tongue, without any affectation, or gross country terms; but to a certain modest countenance that scantly smiled, very sober in his gait, having a kind of sound in his voice that he never lost nor altered; and was of very honest behaviour; never troubled in his talk for any thing that crossed him, and many other such like things, as all that saw in him, and considered them, could but wonder at him."

The anecdotes related of Pericles are equally characteristic. We are told how, once, some idle fellow took it into his head to rail at Pericles in the market-place, reviling him to his face, and following him up and down during the whole day with the most villainous words he could use. Pericles took all quietly, answered

him no word, despatched such matters of business as he had in hand, until nightfall; when he went composedly home, showing no appearance of being disturbed in the least, though the fellow still followed at his heels, with abuse and open defamation. When he came to his own door, it was quite dark; and his people appearing, he commanded one of them to take a torch, and attend the man home to his house. This mute sarcasm, so coolly contemptuous in its dignified calm, is completely the haughty spirit. His reply too, when the people complained that he consumed too much of the public treasure in works of art; he said:—"Well then, the charges shall be mine, if you think fit, and none of yours; provided, however, that no man's name be written upon the works but mine alone."

Pericles in his lofty scorn of the commonalty while providing for their advantage, is like Coriolanus's superb disdain of what he calls "our musty superfluity;" while, the way in which Pericles showed himself superior to greed, venality, and corruption, recalls Brutus's indignant remonstrance against Cassius's having betrayed the mercenariness of "an itching palm."

> "What! shall one of us,
> That struck the foremost man of all this world,
> But for supporting robbers; shall we now
> Contaminate our fingers with base bribes?
> And sell the mighty spaee of our large honours
> For so much trash, as may be grasped thus?—
> I'd rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
> Than such a Roman."

Not only was Pericles inaccessible to bribery, but he never increased his own patrimony by so much as a single groat; although he enriched the city by his excellent management, and brought it to a high state of wealth and greatness. In the economy of his own estate and household, he practised admirable thrift and hus-

bandry; so that, although his prudence brought upon him the imputation of being illiberal in outlay, from those who were ever on the watch to malign his acts, yet it ensured him a well-ordered establishment, with easy, and even affluent circumstances. This wise strictness enabled him to be beneficently charitable to the poor, and munificently generous to those less provident than himself; for when his dearest friend, Anaxagoras, having been careless in expenditure, fell into distress, Pericles hastened to him, and conjured him to accept of help, with an earnestness and delicacy of representation,—as if the favour were done to himself and not to his friend,—that is in perfect keeping with the character of the noble-spirited man.

Pericles' love of Art, and energetic promotion of its cultivation among the people, is one of the points which evinces where the sympathy and assistance of such a wife as Aspasia would be invaluable to him. He ordered public entertainments for the gratification of the populace; and instituted games, wherein music had a predominant share; he appointed certain feast-days for their celebration, presided at them himself, adjudged the rewards to the most deserving among the performers, and provided for the future continuance of these refining pastimes. He was a patron of the renowned sculptor, Phidias; whom he employed in designing and constructing the image of the goddess Minerva, which was cast in brass, and covered with gold. He erected magnificent buildings on the Acropolis; thus supplying the artisans with constant work, and introducing a higher taste among them. He placed theatrical representations within the power of the poorer orders to enjoy, and gave them at once a source of instruction, recreation, and ennobling ideas.

He was like the king of a republic; and enacted the part of a monarch in a commonwealth. He was potent from force of

enlightenment, and not from arbitrary dictation. He prevailed by dint of natural superiority, not by tyranny. He was only a despot in so far as a commanding judgment, and a will capable of carrying out its wise conceptions, its virtuous aims, and its beneficial purposes act despotically; that is, from the despotism of inevitable result, and not from the despotism of irresponsible dominion. Such judgment and will as those of Pericles, operate upon his country and his age, almost independently of their possessor's intentions,—out of their own intrinsic necessity to produce important and lasting effects. He was gifted with a prevision of comprehension greatly in advance of his time,—a sure mark of original genius. He was singularly free from superstition; and viewed with the calmness of a superior mind, those portents which dismayed the ignorant. He was versed in Natural Philosophy; which, as Plutarch nobly says, "yielding a knowledge of the causes and reasons of such ominous signs, instead of a fearful superstition, brings true religion, with assured hope of goodness." The anecdote of Pericles and the solar eclipse, is an illustrative case in point. A certain expedition being afoot, his men were shipped, and the vessel about to sail, when suddenly there was a great eclipse of the sun; the day was very dark, so that the army were stricken with a universal panic, dreading some overwhelming mischance was about to befal them, from the threatening of this evil token. Pericles, seeing the master of his galley stand amazed, as if not knowing what to do, cast his cloak over the man's face, and hid his eyes, asking him whether he thought that any harm or not. The master answering that he thought it none, Pericles said: —"There is no difference between this and that; saving that the body which maketh the darkness, is greater than my cloak which hideth thine eyes."

Another instance of Pericles' enlightened mind, is his abhor-

rence of the cruelties of war. When he was chosen general of the Athenian army, he was much esteemed, because he ever paid regard to the safety of his soldiers. By his own good-will he would never hazard a battle, which he saw might have doubtful issue, or incur much loss of life; and moreover, he never praised, as good generalship, those actions, in which victory was obtained by great peril of the men; since he often said, that, "if none but himself led them to the shambles, they would be immortal."

This aversion from bloodshed caused him comforting reflection in his last moments; for when those standing about his death-bed enumerated his noble acts, and counted up the number of victories he had won when general of the Athenian armies, amounting to nine foughten battles crowned with success to his country, he told the speakers that he "wondered they should so highly praise him for what many other captains had achieved as well, while they forgot to mention the best and most note-worthy thing he had done; which was, that no Athenian had ever worn a black gown through his occasion." This rejoicing of the dying spirit that it should be free from the stain of blood-guiltiness, and the exulting of the conscience at having no such haunting memory to oppress it with a sense of crime, is in accordance with the true essence of Christianity; and affords a lesson, from heathen example, that many a professed Christian might advantageously take home to his bosom.

The warmth that Pericles showed in his friendship is consistent with that peculiar concentration,—a combination of fervour with reserve—which characterized him. His attachments were few and exclusive, but they were intense. The regard which he had for Anaxagoras was strong and steadfast. It was from this serene-hearted philosopher, that he imbibed those habits of self-controul, and sedate demeanour, which enabled him to maintain so tranquil a countenance in the midst of insult and vexation:—it

was from him, too, that Pericles drew those lessons in Natural Philosophy which rendered him impassive to the superstitions of his time. That Anaxagoras fully deserved the esteem of Pericles, we know,—if it were but for those two beautiful incidents recorded in the life of the philosopher. First; that when he was informed the Athenians had condemned him to die, his quiet reply was: —"And Nature them." Second; that when asked what he would have done in commemoration of him, he requested that the children of Athens might have a holiday on the anniversary of his death.

The philosophy of Pericles,—a perfectly Greek one, and quite in consonance with the teaching derived from so bland a nature as that of Anaxagoras,—was, that life is a thing to be enjoyed; and death, a thing not to be feared.

The most powerful sentiments of such natures as that of Pericles are always jealously guarded from observation; and the firmness with which he bore the majority of trials,—even very severe ones,—makes the single occasions when the strong proud heart gave way to uncontroulable emotion, only the more pathetic. But twice in his life was Pericles known to be betrayed into these gusts of feeling; and both, were where his most deep-seated affections lay garnered. The picture of the father advancing to the bier on which lay his dead child, and, in the act of placing the customary funeral wreath on the head, the sight of that innocent face struck into marble whiteness and stillness melting him into floods of grief, is painted for us by Plutarch, who after describing some of Pericles' cruellest mortifications, and bitterest troubles, goes on to say:—"But all this did never pull down his countenance, nor any thing abate the greatness of his mind, what misfortune soever he had sustained. Neither saw they him weep at any time, nor mourn at the funerals of any of his kinsmen or

friends, but at the death of Paralus, his youngest son; for the loss of him alone did melt his heart. Yet he did strive to show his natural constancy, and to keep his accustomed modesty.

But as he would have put a garland of flowers upon his head, sorrow did so pierce his heart when he saw his face, that then he burst out in tears and cried amain; which they never saw him do before all the days of his life."

Yet once besides, did the grand, close-held Periclean heart yield itself to the keen throe of anguish at thought of losing what it had taken to its very centre. When Aspasia was accused of heresy, and in danger of banishment or condemnation to death, Pericles pleaded her cause with such passionate tears and such eloquence of irrepressible grief, that she was saved.

The judges could not resist the spectacle of this firm, manly soul wrung to so open a betrayal of its secret workings, and they were moved to acquit her even out of pity and compassion to him. The mere sight of the effect which the dread of her loss produced upon a man like Pericles, was, of itself, a subtle evidence of her worth. To behold

> "One, whose subdu'd eyes,
> Albeit unused to the melting mood
> Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gum,"

awakes profoundest sympathy; and might well bespeak the value of the woman, for whose sake tears so rare gushed forth.

Aspasia, with her expansive intellect, and her constant association with a man of such intellectual force as Pericles, was likely to form very decided individual opinions; and individuality of opinion constituted heresy among the Greeks. Orthodox belief meant conventional belief; and persons of strong intellect, like Aspasia, can never be contented with mere conventionality in creed. She

was accused of not believing in the gods; because she entertained her own peculiar and higher views of their attributes than vulgar believers could compass. But the herd resent peculiarity in faith, as a tacit reproof to their own generalizing and easy subscription to appointed faith; and they stigmatize distinct belief as unbelief: —the herd dislike enlarged faith as reflection upon their narrow views and circumscribed capacity, and call a more exalted faith, want of faith. To the capacious mind of Aspasia, it is probable that the established forms of Greek worship,—the offerings of doves to Venus, the libations to Bacchus, the sacrifices to Jove, the ideas respecting Tartarus, the inspection of entrails by augurs, the interpretation of signs and omens, and the presiding influence of Ceres, Juno, Pallas, or Neptune in their respectively assigned tutelages, seemed insufficient, and perhaps impious. She may have felt the then received notions of the Greek divinities to be a falling-short of what she conceived regarding true divinity. Socrates suffered death for just such liberal faith in advance of his time. In vain had the Oracle of Delphos pronounced him to be the wisest of mankind; when it was discovered that he dared to think differently from others upon the established forms of mythology, his wisdom was adjudged to be inadequate for the purpose of guiding his conscience, and adopting a mode of belief for himself. He might be "the wisest of mankind;" but he was not wise in their way; and that is ignorance in the eyes of the ignorant. So with Aspasia; her superior intellect procured her no claim to mould her creed according to her individual perceptions of right and wrong; although, possibly, it appeared to her, offering an indignity to what she conceived of true religion, to follow the Pagan worship in its generally-received usages. However this may be, certain it is that Aspasia was one of those included in the charge of holding heterodox opinions; and when the decree went

forth that "Search and enquiry should be made for heretics who did not believe in the gods, and who taught certain new doctrine and opinion touching the operations of things above in the element," Aspasia was accused at the same time with Anaxagoras. She, as we have seen, was rescued; but the philosopher was compelled to leave Athens. These arraignments of persons so dear to Pericles, were the means taken by those among his envious persecutors who dared not assail him more directly, to pierce him through those he loved. Not only did these wasps sting with their utmost venom; but they befouled the character of her whom they could not vitally injure. They spread the blackest slanders, and insinuated the vilest and most scandalous particulars relative to the conduct of Aspasia; they charged her with being a party to the basest acts of turpitude,—betraying persons of her own sex to the power of the other, and ministering to Pericles' pleasures by the most abandoned and criminal inveiglement of other women. The absurdity of such a charge against a wife, seems to carry with it its own refutal; and the circumstance that his foes fabricated calumnies of a similarly odious nature respecting Phidias, whom Pericles greatly admired and fostered, shows how completely these aspersions had him for the object of their covert attack.

Besides the more rank imputations thrown upon Aspasia, the enemies of Pericles accused her of having been instrumental in persuading him to engage in two wars,—both prejudicial to the interests of the Athenian people. One of these was the war against the Samians, on behalf of the Milesians; in order to secure the possession of Priene to Miletus, the birth-place of Aspasia. The other was the hostility against the Megarians, by which Pericles was said to have involved the people in a quarrel, more from personal causes, which concerned Aspasia's wrath at the forcible

abduction of two of her attendants by some Megarians, than for patriotic need. But from the first charge Aspasia is absolved by the tacit evidence of Thucydides; who in his brief account of the Samian war, gives no ground for believing that her influence was used in the matter; alleging, that it arose out of an application on the part of the Milesians to Athens to give a more democratic form to the Samian government. From the second charge she is cleared, by the account in Plutarch, which points out many far more plausible causes for the difference with the Megarians, than the one brought against Pericles and Aspasia jointly, on the ground of private resentment, by Aristophanes. The latter, in common with other comedy-writers of the period, were peculiarly severe, both upon Pericles, and upon Aspasia. Hermippus, Eupolis, and Cratinus, as well as Aristophanes, were merciless in their venomous attacks. A satirist cannot resist a stinging hit; a comic dramatist cannot forego a telling point,—it is the vitality of their calling. Gravity of deportment, and haughtiness of spirit such as characterized Pericles, were much too fruitful themes for caricature, not to provoke the fleers of humorous writers; while the known former conduct of his wife, Aspasia, afforded a ground for coarse allusion and gross insinuation, greatly too tempting to be resisted by pens whose ink was dyed in gall,—black, and bitter. It is scarcely to be expected that wits like these, who lived by the laughter of the Athenian "groundlings," should withstand the opportunity of making the theatre resound with roars at some broad jest against "the new Omphale," "Dejanira," or "Juno," as they entitled Aspasia; not refraining from more injurious hints, besides still more open and opprobrious appellations. It is to be noted, that the only recorded unfavourable representations of Pericles and Aspasia, are to be found in the pages of comic writers of the time; all other contemporary

accounts of them, contain nothing that inculpates either husband or wife.

The world is incalculably obliged, by having such a woman at the side of such a man. Pericles would not have so finely acted for the advantage of mankind, had he not been prompted, stimulated, and aided by Aspasia. Such a qualitied helpmate developes a man's faculties, and perfects his genius. She is perhaps even more valuable thus, acting *through* him, than had she been more palpably great in herself. Her intellect operating in enhancement of his, produces probably a larger amount of gained benefit to the world, than had each stood alone,—he, Pericles, such as he was before he knew her, and would have been without ever having had her at all;—and she, a woman self-distinguished, and self-renowned. A woman's intellect, however high, as manifested by its agency upon that of a superior man, must always be more advantageous in result to humanity, than when exercised solely of its own individual power. It doubles itself, it augments his; and a multiplied emanation of intellectual enlightenment accrues to their fellow-creatures in consequence.

Plato bears witness to the fact of its being Aspasia to whom Pericles was indebted for his mastery as an orator. It is in the "Menexenus" of Plato that we find this testimony; and it is put into the mouth of Socrates, who is one of the speakers in the dialogue, saying:—"My mistress in the art of oratory was perfect in the science which she taught, and had formed many other excellent orators, and one of the most eminent among the Greeks,—Pericles, the son of Xantippus." In an age when oratory was one of the most active means of guiding public opinion, of teaching the commonalty, and swaying men's minds, it was to place the mightiest sceptre within a ruler's grasp, to gift him with pre-eminent powers of oration. The natural faculty of Pericles, was

cultivated into the highest perfection; and the speech which he delivered at the close of the first campaign of the Peloponnesian war stands renowned as the most consummate in excellence of all the compositions of the kind of antiquity. It was an oration upon those who had fallen in the war, as he had delivered a discourse previously at the close of the Samian war, and as it was then the custom so to address the populace on public occasions of the kind. From this great speech may be gathered what Pericles considered to be the character of a good citizen,—thus instructing his hearers in their duties; and how he placed in strong contrast the Spartan, with the Athenian method of bringing up members of the state,—thus inducing emulation, and exciting noble consciousness. It is said to be impossible to do justice to this magnificent oration of Pericles, by any attempt to render it into a modern language; but that it more completely reveals the intellectual power and moral character of the man, than all that the historians and biographers have said of him. It is asserted that the form in which the great orator and statesman has here embodied his lofty conceptions, is beauty chastened and elevated by a noble severity. Athens and Athenians are the objects which his ambition seeks to immortalize, and the whole world is the theatre of their glorious exploits.

In this matchless speech of Pericles, Aspasia's oratorical powers shine with reflected glory;—she having been (as already observed) the instructress who instilled the forms of eloquence and the woman who helped to inspire and develope the thoughts which combine to render it so transcendently great. But it is recorded that her own speeches were remarkable specimens of oratory. Plato, in his "Menexenus," introduces a funeral oration as Aspasia's; and it is therefore just to conclude that she excelled in pronouncing such discourses. Socrates eulogizes Aspasia's

funeral oration, while declaring her to have been his own instructress in the art of rhetoric.

Aspasia was so famed in fascination, that Cyrus gave her name to his favourite, the daughter of Hermotimus of Phocæa; who had before been called Milto,—vermilion,—on account of the beauty of her complexion. The name of Aspasia passed almost into a synonyme for accomplished attraction, and charm of endowment. It was not so much for personal beauty, as for grace of expression, for conversational powers, for skill in all intellectual attainments, that Aspasia was especially noted. In her, intellect outshone all else; it seemed to spread around her so dazzling a light, that her moral qualities were obscured by its glare. Her affections seemed merged in her mental faculties; and as if she could only feel preference, where they found scope for their exercise.

After the death of Pericles, it is said,—on the authority of Æschines,—that she formed an attachment for Lysicles, a man of mean extraction, of low calling, and of clownish nature; and who, from being but a grazier, grew to be the chief man in Athens, owing to his frequenting the company of Aspasia. That she chose so unpromising an object for her precepts, seems only to be accounted for, by believing it to have been a caprice of conscious intellect, resolved to test to the utmost its power;—and which must have approached the miraculous, if it succeeded in converting a boor into a ruler.

The combination of moral and mental excellence in a woman, —and the fact of her womanhood, generally operates to make the moral preponderate,—is the prefection of womanly character; but it is to be believed, that Aspasia can be cited among the World's-noted Women, only as strictly and exclusively the woman of Intellect.

CLEOPATRA.

Cleopatra was the grandest coquette that ever lived. Cæsars were her fit slaves, for she had imperial powers of captivation. She was a gorgeous personification of feminine fascination,—of bewitching womanhood in regal magnificence. She used her female graces as enhancements to her queenly state; and made her power of pleasing, a crown to her royal power. She was born a princess, reigned a queen, won an emperor, swayed a hero, and defeated a conqueror; while her personal blandishments live, in the imagination of posterity, as far outweighing the facts of her fortune. We think of her as the queen of enslavers, more than as queen of Egypt. She stands conspicuous to fancy in might of allurement.

The story of her life tells the tale of her supremacy in the art of subduing. She was born about the year 69 B. C., and was the daughter of Ptolemy Auletes, king of Egypt, by whose will she and her elder brother were appointed joint successors to the crown. This partnership in reigning led to endless dissensions, which at length resulted in such fraternal tyranny that Cleopatra held herself aloof until she could effectually make good her claim to an equal share of regal power, and establish herself firmly on the throne. Hearing that Julius Cæsar had come to Alexandria,

and,—since Pompey was slain,—intended settling the dispute between her brother and herself, she resolved to gain over the arbitrator to her interest beforehand, and so secure a favourable decision. Confident in her seductive powers, if once she could procure access to him, she contrived to compass this by a plan bold as it was successful. The incident is quaintly related in North's Plutarch; where the antiquated diction wonderfully well suits with the old-world narrative. These are Sir Thomas North's words:—"She, only taking Apollodorus of all her friends, took a little boat, and went away with him in it in the night, and came and landed hard by the foot of the castle. Then, having no other mean to come into the court without being known, she laid herself down upon a mattress, or flock-bed, which Apollodorus, her friend, tied and bound up together like a bundle with a great leather thong; and so took her upon his back, and brought her thus hampered in this fardel unto Cæsar in at the castle gate. This was the first occasion (as it is reported) that made Cæsar to love her; but afterwards, when he saw her sweet conversation and pleasant entertainment, he fell then in farther liking with her, and did reconcile her again unto her brother the king, with condition that they two should jointly reign together."

This decision of Cæsar's ill pleased the prince; who rebelled against it, and attempted—first by treason, and then by declared warfare,—to rid himself of his sister's powerful supporter; but Julius defeated the plot, vanquished the army, routed the king, (who, some accounts say, was drowned in the Nile,) and constituted Cleopatra queen of Egypt. She bore a son to Cæsar, named Cæsarion; and when the father returned to Rome, Cleopatra followed him thither. Julius here received her; treating her with such marks of fond adulation—among others, placing her statue in gold by the side of that of Venus—that it gave umbrage to

the Romans. This life she continued to lead; and remained with Julius Cæsar until his death by assassination.

Upon this latter event, Cleopatra hastily quitted Italy, and returned to Egypt; which precipitate retreat, afterwards drew upon her the suspicion of having aided the chief conspirators, Brutus and Cassius, in their war against Octavius and Antony. It was with the avowed intention of examining into her conduct upon this occasion, that Marc Antony, while going to do battle with the Parthians, sent messengers to summon Cleopatra to appear before him and answer the accusations brought against her.

She,—who as an unripe girl, in her "sallet days, when green in judgment," had won "the mightiest Julius" to her will,—was nowise doubtful, now, in the very flower of womanhood, of gaining her way with Antony. She addressed herself to her purpose with equal dexterity and subtlety; but adopted wholly different means. Whereas before, she had had herself conveyed surreptitiously into Cæsar's presence and laid at his very foot, as the surest way to his arms; she this time shone forth in broad noon-day splendour, and plenitude of conscious attractions, sweeping openly and triumphantly to take possession of Marc Antony's heart and senses at once and for ever, as her own rightful conquest. This scene also, shall be given from Plutarch, that the reader may perceive how closely both Shakespeare and Dryden have rendered the picture in their verse; and also because the passage presents most characteristic touches of Cleopatra's self:

"She furnished herself with a world of gifts, store of gold and silver, and of riches, and other sumptuous ornaments, as is credible enough she might bring from so great a house, and from so wealthy and rich a realm as Egypt was. But yet she carried nothing with her wherein she trusted more than in herself, and in the charms and enchantment of her passing beauty and grace. Therefore,

when she was sent unto by divers letters, both from Antonius himself, and also from his friends, she made so light of it, and mocked Antonius so much, that she disdained to set forward otherwise, but to take her barge in the river of Cydnus; the poop whereof was of gold, the sails of purple, and the oars of silver, which kept stroke in rowing after the sound of the music of flutes, hautboys, citherns, viols, and such other instruments as they played upon in the barge. And now for the person of herself: she was laid under a pavilion of cloth of gold tissue, attired like the goddess Venus, commonly drawn in picture; and hard by her, on either hand of her, pretty, fair boys, appareled as painters do set forth god Cupid, with little fans in their hands, with the which they fanned wind upon her. Her ladies and gentlewomen, the fairest of them, were appareled like the nymphs, nereids (which are the mermaids of the waters), and graces; some steering the helm, others tending the tackle and ropes of the barge, out of the which there came a wonderful passing sweet savour of perfumes, that perfumed the wharf's side, pestered with innumerable multitudes of people. Some of them followed the barge all along the river side; others also ran out of the city to see her coming in: so that, in the end, there ran such multitudes of people one after another to see her, that Antonius was left almost alone in the market-place, in his imperial seat to give audience." There was the first step in advantage gained by Cleopatra over Antony. The summoning judge, the intended enquirer into her behaviour, reduced to solitary state,—left there well-nigh by himself, to abide her coming. The account goes on to say:—"When Cleopatra landed, Antonius sent to invite her to supper with him. But she sent him word again, he should do better to come and sup with her. Antonius, therefore, to show himself courteous unto her at her arrival, was contented to obey her, and went to supper with her;

where he found such passing sumptuous fare, that no tongue can express it." Step the second; his invitation set aside, hers accepted, and the delinquent, instead of being the entertained of the judge, becoming his entertainer. "The next night, Antonius feasting her, contended to pass her in magnificence and fineness; but she overcame him in both. So that he himself began to scorn the gross service of his house, in respect of Cleopatra's sumptuousness and fineness. And when Cleopatra found Antonius' feasts to be but gross and soldier-like, in plain manner, she gave it him finely, and without fear taunted him thoroughly." Here was she already installed as rater of his conduct, instead of rendering him an account of hers; and established upon easy terms of playful intimacy, rallying, jesting, giving rival repasts,—in short, drawing him completely within the spell of her witchery.

All the historical traditions of Cleopatra agree in stating that she was not surpassingly handsome; not remarkable for beauty,—linear beauty; and this is borne out by the medals extant of her. But every recorded circumstance tends to confirm the fact, that she possessed a matchless and inexpressible charm of face and person; with incomparable grace in manner and discourse. We are told that she was not so strikingly beautiful as at first view to enamour men; but so sweet was her company and conversation, that a man could not possibly but be taken." Her demeanour is described as irresistibly engaging; courteous, sweet, sportive, and varied. "Furthermore," says Plutarch, "her voice and words were marvellous pleasant; for her tongue was an instrument of music, the which she easily tuned into any language that pleased her." She is said to have spoken with few people by interpreter; having a knowledge of several dialects, besides being perfect mistress of her own,—which latter was not uniformly the case with her royal Egyptian progenitors. This command of language

was one main instrument, in the power she exercised over men's minds. Her oriental taste for magnificence, too, combined with the refinement and cultivation she acquired in her relations with Greece, concurred to render her all-potent in seductive accomplishment. It was upon occasion of one of the rival repasts above alluded to between herself and Antony, on the banks of the Cydnus, that Cleopatra committed the well-known piece of lavish wilfulness,—dissolving the pearl in the goblet at a banquet. Pliny recounts the anecdote; and says that Cleopatra, being desirous of proving to her lover that she could surpass him in magnificence, layed a wager with him that she would expend as much as ten millions of sesterces at a single feast. Antony thought the thing impossible, and defied her to do it. She unfastened from her ears two pearls of enormous size, caused a cup filled with vinegar to be brought, dissolved therein one of these pearls, and swallowed the draught. She was about to sacrifice the other pearl; when Plaucus,—the umpire of the wager,—took possession of it, declaring that Antony had lost. This second pearl was preserved with care, and brought to Rome after the death of Cleopatra; it was then divided in two, and placed in the ears of the statue of Venus, at the Pantheon. The latter circumstance proves both the size and worth of the gem; which probably Dryden had in his mind when,—alluding to Cleopatra's jewels,—he wrote the line:—

"Each pendant in her ear shall be a province."

Antony, wholly given up to his passion for Cleopatra, forsook his warlike enterprise with the Parthians, neglected his affairs with Cæsar at home, left his wife Fulvia to promote as she best might their interests abroad, and accompanied the Queen of Egypt to Alexandria. Again the story is best told in Plutarch's words; which not only depict vividly the facts, but supply curious

anecdotical particulars, known to him by direct family narration. It imparts a singularly real and emphatic effect, to have the historian quoting his own relation's description of the occurrence; and the familiar style in which the thing is told heightens the pleasant air of eye-witness truth we are made to feel in viewing Antony and Cleopatra's mode of life together at this period. He says:—"Antonius yielded himself to go with Cleopatra unto Alexandria, where he spent and lost in childish sports and idle pastimes, the most precious thing a man can spend (as Antiphon says), and that is, Time. For they made an order between them, which they called Amimetobion (as much as to say, no life comparable and matchable with it), one feasting each other by turns, and in cost exceeding all measure and reason. And for proof hereof, I have heard my grandfather, Lampryas, report, that one Philotas, a physician, born in the city of Amphissa, told him, that he was at that present time in Alexandria, and studied physic; and that having acquaintance with one of Antonius' cooks, he took him with him to Antonius' house (being a young man desirous to see things), to show him the wonderful sumptuous charge and preparation of one only supper. When he was in the kitchen, and saw a world of diversities of meats, and amongst others, eight wild boars roasted whole, he began to wonder at it, and said:—'Sure you have a great number of guests to supper.' The cook fell a-laughing, and answered him:—'No,' (quoth he) 'not many guests, nor above twelve in all; but yet all that is boiled or roasted must be served in whole, or else it would be marred straight; for Antonius peradventure will sup presently, or it may be a pretty while hence, or likely enough he will defer it longer, for that he hath drunk well to-day, or else hath had some great matters in hand; and therefore we do not dress one supper only, but many suppers, because we are uncertain of the hour he will sup in."

Cleopatra gave Marc Antony's voluptuous inclinations their full bent. She was naturally constituted to share them; and her will seconding her temperament, she ministered to them in their utmost extent. Dedicating herself to the task of coiling him securely within the folds she had flung around him, the "Serpent of Old Nile" ceased not to fascinate his senses and drowse his thoughts by every device within her power, now that she had him to herself in Alexandria. Whether in matters of sport, or in affairs of earnest, she still maintained her influence over his ideas; ever planning fresh delights to have him at her command, never leaving him night nor day, and scarce letting him go out of her sight. She watched to prevent reflection from gaining hold of him; and the better to ensure this, she promoted his pleasures and partook in all his pursuits with the freedom of a man, and the vivacity of a woman. She made herself at once male associate and female companion to him,—both comrade and mistress, she became his fellow-reveller. She would play at dice with him, drink with him, hunt with him, and accompany him in whatever exercise or bodily activity he practised. Sometimes, when he chose to go about the city at night, disguised like a slave, peering into people's windows and shops, brawling with them in their houses, taking and giving both abuse and blows, Cleopatra would be with him in chambermaid's array, rambling along the streets at his side. Among the mirthful idlenesses she devised for him, was the one of the angling alluded to in Shakespeare with such admirable dramatic art, in making it conduce to develope appropriate touches of character in the Egyptian queen-coquette, while told with curious fidelity to the original account in Plutarch. "On a time, he went to angle for fish; and when he could take none, he was as angry as could be, because Cleopatra stood by. Wherefore he secretly commanded the fishermen, that when he cast in his line, they should straight

dive under the water, and put a fish on his hook which they had taken before; and so snatched up his angling-rod, and brought up a fish twice or thrice. Cleopatra found it straight, yet she seemed not to see it, but wondered at his excellent fishing; but when she was alone by herself among her own people, she told them how it was, and bade them the next morning to be on the water to see the fishing. Antonius threw in his line, and Cleopatra straight commanded one of her men to dive under water before Antonius' men, and to put some old salt-fish upon his bait. When he had hung the fish on his hook, Antonius, thinking he had taken a fish indeed, snatched up his line presently. Then they all fell a-laughing. Cleopatra laughing also, said unto him;—'Leave us Egyptians your angling-rod, my lord. This is not thy profession; thou must hunt after conquering of realms and countries.'" The very woman herself is in that little speech! Winning him to her by playfully bidding him go from her; and smiling a scoff at conquest of kingdoms as inferior to skill in fishing. The touch, too, of finding out the trick at once, yet feigning not to see it, and praising his angling, is precisely the wily Cleopatra.

But at length ill news from Rome stirred Antony from his trance, and he tore himself from the enchantress's "strong toil of grace," to return to Italy. He is described as "rousing himself with much ado, as if he had been wakened out of a deep sleep, and as coming out of a great drunkenness."

For some time, Marc Antony withstood the temptation to trust himself again within the circle of the "great fairy's" magic attractions; but after Fulvia's death, having adjusted the differences that existed between Octavius Cæsar and himself, by an alliance with the sister, Octavia, he went to Asia. Arriving in Syria, it seemed as if, once more near to the spell of her sorceries, he could no longer resist its influence; for he sent messengers to bring Cleo-

patra with them to meet him. To welcome her, he heaped gifts of royal dominion; adding to the territories she already possessed, the provinces of Phœnicia, and of lower Syria, the Isle of Cyprus, a great portion of Cilicia, and part of Arabia. These gifts much displeased the Romans; but even his profuse donations to her, did not so greatly offend them, as the immeasurable honours he paid her. Cleopatra having brought him twins, a son and a daughter, Marc Antony surnamed them the Sun, and the Moon. At a subsequent period, he caused a silver tribunal to be erected in the public square, with two chairs of gold for their own children, and for Cæsarion, her son by Julius Cæsar; while he proclaimed their several appointed monarchies. Cleopatra not only wore upon that occasion, but on all occasions when she appeared in public, the attires of the goddess Isis, and gave audience to her subjects as Isis in person. When Cleopatra was in Athens, being jealous of the honours which Octavia had received in that city, she sought to ingratiate herself with the Athenians, by showering gifts upon them. They, in return, awarded her high distinctions; and appointing certain embassadors to carry the decree to her, Antonius, as a citizen of Athens, headed the deputation, and made an oration to her on behalf of the city. Antony was ever foremost in offering her extravagance of homage. The open court he paid her,—prodigal as it was,—formed only the sincere expression of the feelings he cherished for her. She was the idol of his existence: with her, he was wrapt in joyful fruition; away from her, he flagged unsatisfied, restless, and but half himself. In Armenia, he is described awaiting at a place on the coast Cleopatra's arrival;—"And because she tarried longer than he would have had her, he pined away for love and sorrow; so that he was at such a strait that he wist not what to do, and therefore to wear it out, he gave himself to quaffing and feasting. But he was so drowned with the

love of her, that he could not abide to sit at the table till the feast was ended; but many times, while others banqueted, he ran to the sea-side to see if she were coming." There is an equally characteristic detail of Cleopatra's behaviour, when dreading that Octavia's merits would prevail at length to draw Antony from her society:—"She subtly seemed to languish for the love of Antonius, pining her body for lack of meat. Furthermore, she every way so framed her countenance, that when Antonius came to see her, she cast her eyes upon him, like a woman ravished for joy. Straight again when he went from her, she fell a-weeping, looking ruefully on the matter, and still found means that Antonius should oftentimes find her weeping; and then when he came suddenly upon her, she made as though she dried her eyes, and turned her face away, as if she were unwilling that he should see her weep." Consummate coquetry!

Among the munificent presents bestowed by Antony upon Cleopatra, was the famous library enriched by Eumenes, at Pergamus, consisting of above two hundred thousand books. Marc Antony caused it to be conveyed to Alexandria, giving thereby one of the many causes of offence to the Romans, which they so highly resented; reproaching him with lavishing upon his paramour those treasures of conquest which rightfully should have been brought home to his native city.

At length, Octavius Cæsar, indignant at the treatment of his sister Octavia by her husband, fomented the people's hatred towards Marc Antony; while Antony, on his side, complained of injustice, and mutual recrimination resulted in declared war between them. Cleopatra gave her royal aid, by furnishing troops, money, and provisions, to assist Antony in levying his army; but she lent feminine hindrance, by making a point that she should accompany him to the battle, and by counselling that it should

take place by sea. Antony's land force exceeded in strength his sea power; for his galleys were ill-manned, their equipage being insufficient in number, as well as raw in discipline; however, so enthralled was he by "great Egypt's" will, that, he not only yielded himself blindly to its dictates in thus conducting the action, but when it was lost, he flung himself headlong on her traces, flying when she fled, his vessel following hers, as if literally "his heart to her rudder was tied by the strings, and towed after." The whole account of the expedition strikingly pourtrays the wonted conduct of each. Previously to setting forth, their time was spent in revelry and banqueting; insomuch that the people exclaimed:—"What can they do more for joy of victory, if they win the battle, when they already make such sumptuous feasts at the beginning of the war?" While Antony's ship rode at anchor in the harbour, near Actium, awaiting the enemy's approach, Octavius Cæsar, advancing, took Toryne, a small town not far distant. Antony's officers were startled, knowing their leader's land force was left behind; but Cleopatra turned it into occasion for a joke, as the best means of inducing Antony to take it lightly. She made a pun upon the word "Toryne," (which, in the language of the country, signified a *ladle*, as well as the name of the place), asking, "What danger there could be, from Toryne falling into Cæsar's hands?" And after the battle, when his galley followed her retreating ship, she lifted signals, and waited for him; but he remained plunged in shame and grief, sitting alone in the prow of the vessel, his face buried in his hands. Three days he remained thus brooding and silent, speaking no word to any one, lost in profoundest dejection. But she who had originated his cause of despair, found means to win him from its depths; and once more cheered him into hope and spirit. He rallied his forces, and went again to meet Octavius Cæsar; but sustained reverse upon reverse.

On returning to Alexandria, Marc Antony found Cleopatra busied with a gigantic project, by which she hoped to secure a means of escape from the perils of the pending war. This project was no other than an attempt to have her ships transported across the isthmus of Suez, so that she might get her treasure and people conveyed away from the Mediterranean sea to the Southern ocean, whence she might sail for India. She succeeded in sending some of her vessels; but they were seized and burned by the Arabs.

For a time, Marc Antony indulged a gloomy misanthropic mood; dwelling apart and alone, in a house he built himself down by the sea, in the island of Pharos. But Cleopatra ceased not till she lured him from his melancholy. She made him give up his solitude, and come to her royal palace; where they once more launched into the full tide of riotous gayety. They now substituted for their previous order of existence, "Amimetobion," ("no life comparable,") another one, which they entitled Synapothanumenon (signifying the order and agreement of those who will die together). This new order was nowise inferior in sumptuous joviality to the first; but those who were enrolled, pledged themselves to enjoy life in company unto death. The viands had a flavour of the grave in midst of their costly exquisiteness; and the festive enjoyment was mingled with a desperate sense of mortality. This reckless hilarity was as if to cast off the foreshadowing of coming fate. Cleopatra studied the natures and effects of various poisons. She watched the different modes of death resulting from the venom of sundry kinds of snakes and adders, to discover those which caused least pain, and rendered dismissal most easy. She built near to the temple of Isis, a superb monument, or tomb, of great size and beauty; where she collected all the treasures and precious objects derived from her royal ancestors, in gold, silver, emeralds, pearls, ebony, ivory, and cinnamon,

together with a large number of torches, faggots, and flax. It seemed as though she beheld the menace of death, constantly and certainly, before her; and only meditated which way she could step to meet it with smallest shock to her sensuous nature.

Meantime, Octavius Cæsar was rapidly and surely gaining ground. Antony succeeded in repulsing him, when he encamped near the city; but this temporary defeat of his enemy, was speedily followed by his own final overthrow. He beheld his men forsake him, and go over to the advancing army; and, believing that Cleopatra had betrayed him, he broke forth into fury against her suspected treachery. She, in terror at his wrath, took refuge in her monument; and caused the report of her death to be conveyed to him. Marc Antony, overwhelmed with grief at her loss, and reproaching himself with want of manhood for suffering a woman to precede him in encountering death, attempted to stab himself with his own sword. The wound was not immediately mortal, and he prayed those around to despatch him; but Cleopatra, sending her secretary, Diomedes, to fetch him to her monument, he was conveyed thither in a dying state. Unwilling to open the gates, she had Marc Antony drawn up by ropes to the window; herself aiding her two women (who were the only persons she had allowed to accompany her into the monument) to raise him. This personal exertion on her part, is actually described:—"It was a hard thing for these women to do, to lift him up; but Cleopatra stooping down her head, putting too all her strength to her uttermost power, did lift him up with much ado, and never let go her hold." She received him in her arms, dried the blood from his face, and poured forth a passion of caresses and lamentings; but Antony besought her to cease, and listen to his last entreaties. He called for wine; drank, and then earnestly prayed her to endeavour to save her life, if possible without dishonour, bidding her trust no

man about Cæsar but Proculeius. With all the comforting and encouraging words he could frame to sustain her, he continued while breath lasted to speak to her, and expired, Cleopatra occupying his sole thought.

Marc Antony was but just dead, when Proculeius arrived, sent by Octavius Cæsar; who, having heard that Antony had killed himself, was anxious lest Cleopatra should destroy herself and her treasure together by setting fire to the monument, and so deprive him of his expected booty, and his hoped-for triumph of leading her as his prisoner to Rome. Cleopatra held parley with Proculeius, but would by no means trust him so far as to admit him into the monument. The emissary said all he could to inspire her with confidence in Octavius; and she, with her usual tact, made stipulations that the kingdom of Egypt should devolve upon her sons. Proculeius assured her that she might securely leave all in Cæsar's hands; and, having made accurate inspection of the place, returned with an account of his interview. Octavius sent again; instructing his messenger to hold Cleopatra in talk at the gate of the monument, while Proculeius, by means of a ladder, made good his entrance above.

One of her women, observing his approach, shrieked out to her royal mistress; who drew a dagger she wore about her, and would have made away with herself. But Proculeius held her hand; and entreating her to put trust in Cæsar, disarmed her. Octavius had her strictly guarded, and watched, that she might not destroy herself; but in all other respects caused her to be treated with utmost courtesy, while he himself made his entry into Alexandria. Many princes and commanders sent to entreat for Marc Antony's body, that they might give him honourable burial; but Octavius Cæsar would not take it from Cleopatra, whom he permitted to use what treasure she chose in performing the funeral obsequies. She

sumptuously and royally buried Antony with her own hands; and immolated upon his ashes heaps of wealth,—that of her beauty included, mangling her face and bosom, and abandoning herself to extravagance of grief.

Overcome with passionate sorrow, she fell into a fever of distraction; which she rejoiced at, as affording her a pretext for abstaining from food, and so dying without trouble. She had a physician named Olympus, to whom she confided this intent, in order that he might assist to rid her of life, as he himself recorded in a book he wrote. But Octavius, conjecturing her purpose, by threatening her children with a shameful death if she persevered in starving herself, succeeded in inducing her to take her usual diet, and submit to be cured. Shortly after, Octavius Cæsar came himself in person to see her and comfort her. Cleopatra received him lying upon a little low bed, forlorn and disconsolate; and when she saw him enter, rose up, and cast herself at his feet, just as she was, disrobed and disfigured, her hair in disorder, her face pale and lacerated, her eyes sunk in her head with continual weeping, her bosom bearing the marks she had inflicted in her anguish, her voice weak and trembling. In short, her body showed the condition of her mind; and yet the natural grace and comeliness peculiar to her, gave a charm beyond beauty to the kneeling queen.

Cæsar raised her from the ground, made her lie down again, and seated himself by her bedside; while Cleopatra entered upon a vindication of her conduct, seeking to excuse and clear herself from blame. Octavius, in his calm cold way, refuted every point she advanced. Then she suddenly altered her speech, and besought his clemency; as though she feared death, and were anxious to live. Next, she gave him a written memorial of all the ready money and treasure she had. But there chanced to be present, Seleucus, one of her treasurers; who, to evince his probity,

stated that Cleopatra had not inserted all, but had kept many things back on purpose. This so enraged Cleopatra, that she flew upon him, seized him by the hair of his head, and soundly boxed his ears. Cæsar was highly amused, and rescued the man. Upon which, Cleopatra took a deprecatory tone; said it was hard that when Cæsar took the pains to come to her, and so honoured her, her own servants should accuse her to him; that she had but reserved some few jewels and woman's trifles, not for herself,—not to deck her unhappy self withal,—but intending them as presents for Octavia and Livia, that they might intercede with Cæsar for favour and mercy. Cæsar, pleased to hear her say this, which looked like a desire to save her life, spoke encouragingly to her, assured her of his protection, and promised to use her more honourably and bountifully than she had any idea of, and took leave, imagining that he had successfully imposed upon her credulity, and taught her to trust in his good faith. But he little knew Cleopatra. She had deluded him; not he, her. The passionless Octavius might be unassailable by the witchery of Cleopatra; but he was not proof against her practised skill in winding men's judgments as she wished. She could not subjugate his senses; but she beguiled his sense into construing dropped hints as she intended.

Cleopatra took advantage of the professions Octavius Cæsar had made her, by sending to request that he would allow her to offer the last oblations of the dead to the soul of Antony; and secretly resolved to defeat Octavius's projected triumph, by her own death. The narrative is so eloquently told in Plutarch, that he shall be again quoted:—"She was carried to the place where his tomb was, and there falling down on her knees, embracing it, the tears running down her cheeks, she said:—'O my dear lord, Antonius, it is not long since I buried thee here, being a free woman; and now I offer unto thee the funeral sprinklings and obla-

tions, being a captive and prisoner; and yet I am forbidden and kept from tearing and murthering this captive body of mine with blows, which they carefully guard and keep, only to triumph of thee. Look therefore henceforth for no other honours, offerings, nor sacrifices from me; for these are the last which Cleopatra can give thee, since now they carry her away. Whilst we lived together, nothing could sever our company; but now at our death, I fear me they will make us change our countries. For as thou, being a Roman, hast been buried in Egypt, even so, wretched creature, I, an Egyptian, shall be buried in Italy, which shall be all the good that I have received by thy country. If therefore, the gods where thou art now have any power and authority, since our gods here have forsaken us, suffer not thy true friend and lover to be carried away alive, that in me they triumph of thee; but receive me with thee, and let me be buried in one self tomb with thee. For though my griefs and miseries be infinite, yet none hath grieved me more, nor that I could less bear withal, than this small time which I have been driven to live alone without thee.' Then, having ended these doleful plaints, and crowned the tomb with garlands and sundry nosegays, and marvellous lovingly embraced the same, she commanded they should prepare her bath; and when she had bathed and washed herself, she fell to her meat and was sumptuously served. Now while she was at dinner, there came a countryman, and brought her a basket. The soldiers that warded at the gates, asked him straight what he had in his basket. He opened his basket, and took out the leaves that covered the figs, and showed them that they were figs he brought. They all of them marvelled to see so goodly figs. The countryman laughed to hear them, and bade them take some if they would. They believed he told them truly; and so bade him carry them in. After Cleopatra had dined, she sent a certain table writ-

ten and sealed unto Cæsar, and commanded them all to go out of the tomb where she was, but the two women; then she shut the doors to her. Cæsar, when he received this table, and began to read her lamentation and petition, requesting him that he would let her be buried with Antonius, found straight what she meant, and thought to have gone thither himself; howbeit he sent one before, in all haste, to see what it was. Her death was very sudden; for those whom Cæsar sent unto her, ran thither in all haste possible, and found the soldiers standing at the gate, mistrusting nothing, nor understanding of her death. But when they opened the doors, they found Cleopatra stark dead, laid upon a bed of gold, attired and arrayed in her royal robes, and one of her two women, which was called Iras, dead at her feet; and her other woman, called Charmian, half dead and trembling, trimming the diadem which Cleopatra wore upon her head. One of the soldiers, seeing her, angrily said unto her:—'Is that well done, Charmian?' 'Very well,' said she again, 'and meet for a princess descended from the race of so many noble kings.' She said no more; but fell down dead, hard by the bed. Some report that this aspic was brought unto her in the basket with figs, and that she had commanded them to hide it under the fig leaves, that when she should think to take out the figs, the aspic should bite her before she should see it; howbeit, that when she would have taken away the leaves for the figs she perceived it, and said:—'Art thou here, then?' And so, her arm being naked, she put it to the aspic to be bitten. Others say again, that she kept it in a box; and that she did prick and thrust it with a spindle of gold, so that the aspic being angered withal, leapt out with great fury, and bit her in the arm. Howbeit, few can tell the truth. For they report also, that she had hidden poison in a hollow razor, which she carried in the hair of her head; and yet there was no mark seen on her body,

or any sign discerned that she was poisoned, neither also did they find this serpent in her tomb; but it was reported only, that there were seen certain fresh tracks where it had gone, on the tomb side toward the sea, and especially by the door side. Some say, also, that they found two little pretty bitings in her arm, scant to be discerned; the which it seemeth Cæsar himself gave credit unto, because in his triumph he carried Cleopatra's image, with an aspic biting of her arm. Now Cæsar, though he was marvellous sorry for the death of Cleopatra, yet he wondered at her noble mind and courage; and therefore commanded she should be nobly buried, and layed by Antonius. Cleopatra died, being eight and thirty years old; after she had reigned two and twenty years, and governed about fourteen of them with Antonius."

Shakespeare, with his fine knowledge that truth to Nature is most powerful for producing effect in Dramatic Art, has adhered with singular closeness to the history of Cleopatra; weaving the incidents of the narrative with extraordinary skill and fidelity into his poetic play, and drawing her character in strict resemblance with the original portrait of the real woman. The heightening touches that he has added, are precisely in keeping; and are just such as his genius alone knew how to supply, deducing them from the broad sketch, and filling them in harmoniously with the existing outline. The fact is, we can hardly separate the idea of *his* Cleopatra from Cleopatra herself; and when we think of her, we think of her as he has painted her. Who but himself could have so finished the picture—presenting her to our knowledge with more visible completeness than history itself? Plutarch has given us the queen and woman, Cleopatra, in curiously particularized detail of person, speech, act, and manner, as she lived; Shakespeare makes her appear, speak, move, breathe, and live again before us. He has caused us to behold her in all that marked in-

dividuality, in those minute by-betrayals of character, which only either personal knowledge, or Shakespeare's page, enables us to witness. No poet but himself has drawn Cleopatra in her true identity, although she has formed the theme of several. Chaucer has depicted her as the ladye-love of chivalry, bewailing "her knight, Antonius" (!), and throwing herself into a pit of serpents for his sake, like a heroine of old romance. Corneille's Cleopatra has scarcely a trait of character in consonance with historic truth. The author owns,—in his analysis of the play (Pompée),—that he makes her merely *ambitious* in love. Faithful to the requirements of conventional tragic dignity, he drew her portrait according to the pattern of French tragedy-queens; and left her with hardly a touch of individuality. Perhaps the one couplet that may be cited as containing any approach to Cleopatran nature, in its regal consciousness of power to captivate, is where he makes her say:—

"Apprends qu'une princesse aimant sa renommée,
Quand elle dit qu'elle aime, est sure d'être aimée."

[Know, that a queen, whose fame's her concern,
When she owns that she loves, *must* be loved in return.]

Fletcher, in his play of "The False One," shows her in her early youth, in her first adventure, with Julius Cæsar; and it suffices for her in her "sallet days," although the character is too sustained in dignity, too consistent in nobility of feeling and diction, for the wayward, variable Cleopatra. The descriptions given of her might suit any other charming heroine:—

"By this light, the woman's a rare woman;
A lady of that catching youth and beauty,
That unmatched sweetness ——."

"Eyes that are the winning'st orators,
A youth that opens like perpetual spring,
And, to all these, a tongue that can deliver
The oracles of love."

In the first interview with Julius Cæsar, where she is brought in the mattress to his chamber, her speech and manner are ingeniously tinctured with the delicate flattery by which she won him; while the most characteristic things she utters in the course of the play are the following passages:—

> "Oh, I could curse myself, that was so foolish,
> So fondly childish, to believe his tongue,
> His promising tongue, *ere I could catch his temper.*"

And:—

> "I will go study mischief,
> And put a look on, arm'd with all my cunnings,
> Shall meet him like a basilisk, and strike him!
> Love, put destroying flames into mine eyes,
> Into my smiles deceits, that I may torture him,
> *That I may make him love to death, and laugh at him!*"

And again:—

> "I love with as much ambition as a conqueror,
> And where I love will triumph!"

There is the future Cleopatra in those touches; but they occur as exceptions to the general smooth grace with which Fletcher has delineated her.

Dryden, like Shakespeare, paraphrased Plutarch's account of Cleopatra's sailing up the river Cydnus to meet Marc Antony; and he has paralleled in his play of "All for Love," several other of the descriptive passages in "Antony and Cleopatra," with rich poetic beauty. But the dramatic discrimination and development of Cleopatran character, so masterfully achieved by Shakespeare, is wholly wanting in Dryden. He has made her a tender, impassioned woman,—the fitting heroine for "All for Love, or the World well lost;" but not the renowned Egyptian queen,—that wondrous combination of all that is winning, with so much that is repulsive,—all that is enchanting, with so much that is despicable,

—which Shakespeare has compounded into one gorgeously vivid impersonation. Dryden's most individual bit, is where he makes Cleopatra exclaim:—

"Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms!
You have been too long away from my embraces;
But when I have you fast, and all my own,
With broken murmurs and with amorous sighs,
I'll say you were unkind, and *punish you,*
And mark you red with many an eager kiss."

Leigh Hunt has hit off the spirit of Cleopatra, when he alludes to her as:—

"That southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.'

And Horace sums her magic influence in two words, where he calls her "fatal prodigy" ["fatale monstrum."]

But, both by description, and self-revealment, Shakespeare has exhibited her character in its true and full nature. Diversified, yet complete; inconsistent, yet in keeping; whimsical, yet direct of purpose; replete with jarring elements, yet in perfect consonance with itself. In what is said of her, in what is said to her, in what she says herself, he makes us equally behold the actual woman, Cleopatra.

Enobarbus speaks of her thus:—

"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety: Other women
Cloy the appetites they feed; but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies. For vilest things
Become themselves in her."

Antony addresses her with:—

"Fie, wrangling queen!
Whom every thing becomes,—to chide, to laugh,
To weep; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself in thee, fair and admired!"

And she, musing of Antony in his absence, and wondering whether he thinks of her, says,—with a fine daring disparagement of her oriental sun-embrowned complexion, secure in its spell upon men's warm imaginations:—

> "Think on me,
> That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black,
> And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Cæsar,
> When thou wast here above the ground, I was
> A morsel for a monarch: and great Pompey
> Would stand, and make his eyes grow in my brow;
> There would he anchor his aspèct, and die
> With looking on his life."

One of the most perfect touches of characteristic individuality in all that Cleopatra utters, is that little question;—"What says *the married woman?*" when asking Antony of his wife Fulvia. It is a fine piece of pungent insolence—exquisitely Cleopatran.

Shakespeare's epithets for Cleopatra, come into the mind involuntarily when speaking of her. We use his titles for her, in naming her, while relating her history. The "serpent of old Nile" dwells in our mind as her proper designation; "this great fairy," "great Egypt," and other of his names, for her, belong to her like her own; but there is one, which he assigns to her, that wonderfully distinguishes Cleopatra, in her mingled regality and familiarity of womanhood. Agrippa calls her "Royal wench!" in admiration at her sovereignty in attracting men; and it finely individualizes her character in its twofold quality of queenly sway with feminine fascination.

The great secret of Cleopatra's power of winning, was the instinctive insight she possessed into men's dispositions, and her exquisite tact in discovering their vulnerable points. She won Julius Cæsar by throwing herself into his power; and won Marc Antony by exercising her power over him. She flattered Julius

Cæsar's love of dominion by submitting herself to it; she swayed Marc Antony's heart by assuming rule there. She caused herself to be carried to Julius Cæsar; she bade Marc Antony come to her. She behaved with humility and deference to Julius; she treated Antony with gay despotism, and wayward playfulness. She derived her fortune, and held her crown from Julius Cæsar's bestowal; she outvied Antony in costly display and sumptuous entertainment.

Her irresistible allurement lay in her faculty of adapting herself to men's peculiar tastes and predilections. She followed Julius to Rome; she shared Antony's wildest frolics. The ample way in which she at once understood and responded to Marc Antony's propensities, explains the unbounded ascendency attained over him. His enjoyment, his gratification, his pleasure, were her study; and to minister to them, her delight. Antony's passion for Cleopatra was a luxurious intoxication; and she not only presented him the voluptuous draught, but drained it with him.

Cleopatra is enthroned enchantress of the world. She captivated Julius Cæsar; entranced the heart and senses of Marc Antony, and succeeded in beguiling the wary Octavius. She, of all her sex, in her person gave to the unworthy art of coquetry, a something of magnificent and lustrous in its so-potent exercise. Hers was the poetry of coquetry.

SAINT CECILIA.

Among the firm-hearted band who suffered persecution and death for faith's sake,—the early martyrs,—one of the most shining examples is Saint Cecilia. To use Fuller's quaint form of expression:—"She lived in an age which we may call the first cock-crowing after the midnight of ignorance and superstition."

The events which mark her career are told with beautiful simplicity in the "Golden Legend" ["Legenda Aurea"]; and Chaucer's charming version of the story, in his "Second Nun's Tale," is almost a literal rhythmical translation of the old Latin legend. The details furnished in the "Acta S. Cæciliæ" have been arranged into narrative order with hagiographical zeal, by Dom Prosper Guéranger, Abbé de Solesmes; who has traced the career of the Saint through her life, martyrdom, and posthumous glory of canonization, in a no less picturesque than reverential form,—and that is the only spirit in which to treat a subject of this kind. Its remote antiquity, which, while limiting and obscuring authentic particulars, tends to throw an air of poetry and idealization over what few facts are known, demands a certain amount of child like credence, when receiving the relation of such histories. The modern fashion is too much for questioning "the old familiar faces" of accepted tradition. We are too fond of *doubting;* we are too

apt to discredit every thing that we cannot prove. As Wordsworth, in his fine sonnet "The World is too much with us," protests against the dimmed perceptions of prosaic getters and spenders; so it is with prosy detecters of falsity in antique records; their literal accuracy blinds them to the intermixture of larger veracity which may be gathered from the very fables they point out as wholly fictitious. They cannot discern the *spirit* of truth that dwells within the dubious letter of legendary lore. The sceptical sneerer might find matter for questioning pause, in some of the points of St. Cecilia's story as handed down to posterity by venerating tradition; but those who are willing to perceive the lustre of purity,—the glory of apostleship, and the courage of holiness, in this beautiful legend, will take pleasure in perusing it according to narrated account.

Under the empire of Alexander Severus, the persecution against Christians, which previously and subsequently was carried on with terrific virulence, sustained a temporary cessation, owing to the influence of the young emperor's mother, Julia Mammæa, who entertained much regard for the members of the new sect; and who, if Eusebius's words may be so interpreted, secretly professed their faith. She was known to send for the learned and saintly Origen, from Alexandria to Antioch, while she was there; and that she held controversial discourses with him, and loaded him with gifts and honours. Mammæa superintended the education of her son herself; remained at his side through life; helped him with her counsel in state affairs; followed him to the field, in all his campaigns; and even shared his death, when he fell at the head of his troops, on the banks of the Rhine, in a war against the Germans. Coming to the imperial throne when at so early an age as to be in his fourteenth year only, he might probably have embraced the same form of religion as his mother, had not

policy appointed his creed for him; but he nevertheless entertained a regard for Christianity and its Divine Founder which never forsook him. The portion of his palace dedicated to the reception of his Lares, or household gods, not only contained the statues of the gods and of those emperors most worthy of regard; but Severus had there a statue of Jesus Christ Himself, to which he paid divine honours. Lord Bacon, in his "Advancement of Learning," mentions a similar circumstance respecting the Emperor Adrian:—"For having Christ in veneration, not as a God or Saviour, but as a wonder or novelty; and having his picture in his gallery, matched with Apollonius, with whom in his vain imagination, he thought he had some conformity; yet it served the turn to allay the bitter hatred of those times against the Christian name, so as the church had peace during his time." Alexander Severus's admiration went so far as to induce him to make a proposal that the Founder of a religion, so pure in its morality, should be admitted among the rank of the gods. The senate desired to consult the oracles upon this extraordinary proposition of the emperor; and according to Lampridius, a contemporary writer, the oracular response was, that if this new apotheosis were celebrated, the pagan temples would be abandoned, and all men would become Christians.

Other particulars recorded of this emperor's mild conduct, and of his enlightened perception of the fine moral influence belonging to the new faith, deserve mention. The grandly comprehensive maxim:—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," was always in his mouth, and openly avowed as being adopted from the tenets of the Christians. He caused it to be graven as an inscription in his palace; and in the principal public edifices. By his order, too, a herald publicly proclaimed it, in the punishment of criminals. His regard for Christianity extended

to individuals; and several official posts about his own court were filled by Christians who enjoyed his favour. A signal instance of his wise ordination occurred with regard to a place called "*Taberna meritoria*," ["A place for public entertainment;"— "A Tavern"]; which, becoming dedicated to Christian usage under the pontificate of Calixtus, as a church, occasioned much umbrage to the original heathen occupants; who complained to Severus, that a place previously theirs, had been taken from them and consecrated to the service of a religion unrecognized by the laws of the empire. Severus replied thus nobly:—"I would rather God were honoured in this spot, in whatever form of worship, than see it again yielded up to sellers of wine."

But, if this emperor himself were thus favourable to the Christians, there was a large body of influential men in the state who beheld with abhorrence and dread all progress of the new sect towards becoming epidemical. An association that held itself firmly impassive to all edicts of suppression, seemed to them a monster that could not be too speedily crushed. They had notable example for persecution; even for decreeing the massacre of Christians, they could cite strong precedent. Beneath the fierce autocracy of Nero, the leniency of Trajan, and the philosophical forbearance of Marcus Aurelius, this rising body had alike suffered deadly hostility. Domitian Ulpian, who held the office of Præfectus Prætorio, under Alexander Severus, was one of the chief of these opposers of Christianity; and as he had considerable ascendency over the young emperor's mind, his animosity against the Christians acted in counterbalance to the maternal influence in their favour. Popular prejudice, also, was largely on the side of the prevailing power; and Tertullian,—in his "Apologetic Works," written more than thirty years before the period here treated of,—remarks that on all occasions of general tumult, the multitude were accustomed to

yell forth their barbarous cry,—"To the lions with the Christians!" Thus, notwithstanding the tolerance of the emperor himself towards the oppressed sect—a tolerance which was more negative than active—several martyrdoms of the early Christians took place during his reign, both in the Roman dominions, and in Rome itself. The names of Calepodius, Palmatius, Simplicius, Martina, and Tatiana, have reached us as among the victims who fell sacrifices here; —and Pope Calixtus—one of the earliest Christian pontiffs—died a martyr to the proscribed faith.

Pope Urban, his successor, had been twice summoned before the Prætorium; and had each time boldly avouched the free right of his ministry. But after that, he could no longer abide within the interior of the city; and appearing but at rare intervals in Rome, with secrecy and circumspection, he took refuge from his enemies, by lurking in its precincts, concealed and apart. His place of retreat was beneath the shadow of the sacred Crypts of the Appian Way, near the tombs of the martyrs. It was there he exercised his holy function, receiving into the bosom of the church such heathens as were touched by grace, admonishing the vacillating, and fortifying the faithful. A few priests and deacons assisted him, sharing his duties and his perils. Along the path leading to the pontiff's retreat, were scattered some of those lowly poor, whose brethren were preached to by the Saviour himself, watching as devoted and vigilant sentinels. Known to the Christians in Rome, they were the intermediaries between the church and her Head; and served to screen from the eyes of the Prætorian emissaries any trace of those secret communications which maintained the vitality of the Christian church.

A sketch of the Appian Way, as it existed in the third century —the period when Saint Cecilia lived—will best usher in her story with appropriately scenic interest, and give it imaged reality of

occurrence. Moreover, this picturesque track forms a kind of link between the Rome of the Gentiles, and the Rome of the Christians; between the eternal city, and the centre of Christendom; between ancient Rome, surnamed "Mistress of the World," and the nucleus of that Spiritual Kingdom founded on the "Rock of Ages." It presents a vast and sumptuous gallery of pagan sepulchres dedicated to the entombment of illustrious Roman families; while beneath the soil supporting these numberless fine monuments, the very ruins of which still excite wonder and admiration, there lies a consecrated labyrinth, within whose shade sleep a martyr legion. The grandeur and solemnity of this renowned Way are unequalled; which,—at the epoch when Alexander Severus was emperor, and when the city was enclosed on that side by the walls of Servius Tullius, commenced at the Capenian Gate, and led out towards the Campagna. Traversing the plain, its line marked by superb villas, and temples of severe or graceful styles in architecture, its principal embellishment consisted in the double range of tombs extending for more than fourteen miles on each side of the way. The pavement, formed of large masses of lava, proclaims the magnificence and solidity of the works of a regal people; and on it may be traced deep-indented ruts, made by the chariot-wheels of Romans, more than two thousand years since. Somewhat narrow, like all the ancient roads, the Appian Way was confined between two foot paths, on the borders of which rose the sepulchres. The form of these funereal monuments was varied: some appeared like temples, of grave or elegant design; others wore the circular shape of a tower; many were reared in pyramidal form; and others again were quadrilateral. These sepulchres were in some instances appropriated to individuals, in others to entire families. In some cases the body reposed in a sarcophagus, while in others the tomb contained only the ashes of the de-

ceased, according to the customs introduced in Rome towards the close of the Republic. Besides the tombs, the Appian Way contained likewise those pigeon-holed receptacles, ["columbaria,"] in which a large number of urns were deposited, containing the ashes of several generations. All this assemblage of sepulchres imparted to the Way an aspect of mournfulness, which contrasted strikingly with the luxury and richness of the buildings that formed a background to these avenues of death. The pagans themselves were sensible of this lesson upon the nothingness of life, afforded by choosing a public way as a place for entombment; while the Christians completed the monition, by hollowing beneath the soil of the Appian Way itself, whole cities of sepulchral abode, destined not only to recall to mankind the thought of mortality, but to raise them to the contemplation of immortal trust.

One of the poets in the early period of the Roman empire—Statius—in his "Sylvæ," entitles this majestic road "the Queen of Ways" ["Regina viarum"]; and thus it appeared, in its general aspect, at the time he wrote.

Calixtus, during his pontificate, was unwearied in his zealous care to protect the sacred crypts beneath the Appian Way, and to preserve from desecration the saintly and apostolic remains they enshrouded. He persevered in his pious work; and the Christians retained as their sanctuary these subterranean burial-places, known under the name of catacombs. Skirting the Appian Way, at some little distance, there rises a gentle eminence, just above a spot which tradition asserts to be the site of the grotto and fountains of Egeria. Here there was a temple erected in the time of the Roman Republic; and here it was, that Pope Urban found a safe retreat. An oratory excavated beneath the earth,—under the very pagan temple which has since been consecrated as a church, bearing the name of St. Urban,—and having communication with

the extensive range of subterranean crypts, afforded a secure refuge aloof from public notice, and allowed of access and intercourse with the Christians.

Among the flock of the faithful, who revered Urban as their visible head, who resorted to him for counsel and instruction, and who enjoyed his peculiar favour for her piety and innocence, was the youthful Cecilia. Daughter of a noble Roman house (some asserting her to be a descendant of the same family with that Cecilia Metella whose sumptuous pagan monument adorns the Appian Way,—now, even in decay, serving as a notable adornment to the place), she had early adopted the Christian faith, although her parents adhered to the old heathen form of worship. An ancient tradition in Rome assigns the Campus Martius as the site where the house stood in which Cecilia was born, during the early part of the third century; and a church was erected there in the eighteenth century, by Pope Benedict XIII., bearing the inscription:—"This is the house in which Saint Cecilia prayed."

HAEC EST DOMVS
IN QVA ORABAT
SANCTA CAECILIA.

Her father and mother appear to have offered no obstruction to the course of their daughter's religious opinions; which had already obtained many followers in Rome, and which counted professors even in the imperial household itself. Either from indifference, or from affection, they permitted her to pursue her own form of doctine, and to attend the assemblages of the Christians. Cecilia could not only go and pray with the faithful in the churches where the mysteries of their creed were celebrated with a certain amount of publicity, during the period when Christianity enjoyed a temporary immunity from persecution; but she was able

to frequent the crypts of the martyrs, for the purpose of assisting in those anniversaries of such heroic members of the devoted band as had met death in its cause. The poor, who guarded the secret of Urban's retreat, knew the gentle maiden ; and often conveyed her messages, or conducted her steps to the venerable pontiff himself.

The Christians at that epoch lived with the idea of possible martyrdom constantly present to them ; it entered, as a necessary element, into all their visions of the future. But this formidable prospect had no power to appal the soul of the young Cecilia. She, on the contrary, learned to dwell upon it, as upon a promised repose of peace and bliss. Martyrdom would for ever unite her with Christ, who had deigned to select her from a pagan family that he might reveal himself unto her. Awaiting this welcome summons, she lived within the depths of her heart in the constant company of her Divine Master, ceasing not to commune with him in holy prayer and converse, day nor night. Enraptured with this secret conference, she sought Him perpetually in His holy oracle, in His volume of Evangels, which she kept hidden beneath the folds of her robe, resting ever in her bosom. ["Absconditum semper Evangelium Christi gerebat in pectore." *Acta S. Cæciliæ.*] In the ardour of her self-dedication to her chosen Heavenly Spouse, she vowed ever to remain immaculate in virgin faith and purity; and abided in meek hope the period when she should be called to receive her nuptial crown of immortality.

Her guardian spirit was permitted to take visible shape:—an Angel alighted beside her in the silent hours of seclusion and contemplation: like the winged messenger sent to the first pair in paradise, "the glorious shape seem'd another morn risen on midnoon ;" so bright, so seraphic he appeared:—

> "Like Maia's son he stood,
> And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
> The circuit wide."

Meanwhile Cecilia's parents, knowing nothing of her vow, chose her an earthly bridegroom. A young and noble Roman, named Valerian, was the object they selected as a fitting husband for their beautiful daughter. His rank, his generous qualities, rendered him worthy to be the possessor of the treasure they proposed to bestow upon him; while the maiden's gentle graces and goodness made him rejoice in the prospect of calling her his own. Valerian had a brother, Tiburtius, to whom he was fondly attached; and he trusted that this new tie would be only an additional means of strengthening their fraternal bond of happy union. So indeed was it to be: though not in the way that the pagan youth then imagined. They were all three to be united in links of more than mortal felicity.

The day for the celebration of the marriage was appointed, and the two patrician families prepared with all due magnificence to honour the espousals of two of their scions, whose youth, beauty, and distinction made them a source of joyful pride to their kindred. Classical and poetical description has handed down to us the costume and environments that marked the nuptial ceremony in those early times. Catullus's glowing marriage-song of "Julia and Manlius," among others, affords indication of the picturesque accompaniments that attended ancient spousal rites:—

"Claustra pandite, januæ:
Virgo adest. Viden' ut faces
Splendidas quatiunt comas?"

"But the doors set open wide,
For she comes,—the bride, the bride!
Don't you see the torches there,
How they shake their shining hair?"
Leigh Hunt's translation.

And there is also allusion to the bridal music; the songs to Hymen, the glad epithalamia, which crowned the feast with rich

harmonious triumph; and which form so momentous a feature in Cecilia's marriage-day:—

"Hymen, Hymenæus O;
Slip thy snowy feet in socks
Yellow-tinged, and girt thy locks
With sweet-flowered marjoram,
And in saffron veil, O come;

Meet the day with dancing pleasure,
Singing out a nuptial measure,
And with fine hand at the air
Shake the pine-torch with a flare."

Ibid.

We are thus enabled from classic authority, to image to ourselves how the fair bride, Cecilia, was led forth, attired in a tunic of soft white wool, simply girdled with a slender cincture, also white and woollen; her long and glossy hair braided into six tresses, after the manner of the vestal virgins,—for so the Roman usage permitted to brides on the day they were wedded, as a farewell token of their maiden state; a veil of flame-coloured hue floating around her face and figure, screening her from public gaze, while reserving her modest beauty to view of the attendant hovering angel.

Like Edmund Spenser's bride, in his own perfect Epithala-

"Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesses her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks!
And the pure snow with goodly vermil stain,
Like crimsin died in grain,
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service, and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair
The more they on it stare;

But her sad* eyes, still fastend on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glaunce awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound."

So stood Cecilia, her eyes bent groundward, submitting to lend external participation in the pagan rites going on around her; but inwardly maintaining her isolation of purity and devout worship. In her bodily presence, but spiritual absence of abstracted meditation, the heathen observances proceeded; the offering of wine and milk took place, the ceremonial of breaking the cake, and the final placing of her hand within that of Valerian, all went on as if she took part in the celebration of which she was but passive spectatress.

At close of day, according to antique habitude, the newly wedded wife was conducted to the dwelling of her husband. Valerian's house was situated in the transtiberine quarter of Rome; and it was here that, in after times, the basilica, or church dedicated to Saint Cecilia, was erected, to mark the spot of her triumph. The nuptial torches lighted the way of the marriage procession, as they approached the spousal dwelling. On the threshold, beneath the portico adorned with white draperies, amid which hung garlands of flowers and green foliage, Valerian stood awaiting Cecilia. There are two allusions in Shakespeare's Coriolanus that illustrate this ancient Roman bridal observance. Aufidius says:—"More dances my rapt heart, than when I first my wedded mistress saw bestride my threshold."

And Coriolanus himself, in the cheerfulness of his conquering courage and safety, exclaims:—

"O! let me clip you
In arms as sound, as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry, as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward."—

* Serious—steadfast.

Cecilia crossed the threshold: they brought her fair water, emblem of purity; they gave her a key, symbol of the household duties henceforth to be committed to her charge; they led her to a seat upon a fleece of unspun wool, in token of the domestic labours she would have to perform. Then the wedding guests passed, with the young couple into the Triclinium, or apartment where the marriage supper was served. During the repast, an epithalamium was sung, which celebrated the union of Valerian and Cecilia: a choir of musicians filled the hall with their melodious voices in concord with resounding instruments, and with the rich outpouring of the full-toned organ. Amidst this swelling harmony, Cecilia chanted softly to herself, lifting her soul to God in praise and adoration, and praying him to keep her immaculate,—in heart and body,—evermore. ["Cantantibus organis, Cecilia in corde suo soli Domino decantabat, dicens: Fiat cor meum et corpus meum immaculatum ut non confundar." *Acta S. Ceciliæ.*] For this pious act of spiritual elevation, shaping itself in musical heart-utterance, Cecilia has been ever since regarded as the patron Saint of Music.

The feast ended, a band of matrons conducted the trembling steps of the bride to the door of the nuptial-chamber; where its rich decorations—in all the beauty of Roman taste and luxury—shone with a tempered charm; amid the silence and darkened light, affording delicious contrast with the glare and tumult of the wedding banquet. The bridegroom followed; and the matrons retired.

When Cecilia found herself alone with Valerian, her young husband, a holy calm fell upon her spirit; and she said to him, with her gentle voice sounding sweeter and softer than ever, amid the quiet of the night-scene:—"Dear friend, I have a secret to confide to thee: swear to me that thou wilt respect and preserve it."—Valerian swore with ardour to keep her secret, and that nothing

on earth should force him to reveal it.—"Listen, then," replied Cecilia; "an Angel of God watches over me:—aid me to preserve my vow, and he will love thee as he loves me, and shower on thee his blessed favours of guardianship and protection." Thereupon she explained to him the vow of virgin purity and immaculacy she had taken, and besought him to respect it.

The young man, deeply troubled, answered her thus:—"Cecilia, if you would that I believe your word, let me behold this Angel. When I have seen him, if I recognize him for the Angel of God, I will do as you exhort me: but if I find that thou lovest another man, be sure my sword shall pierce both him and thyself." Upon which, the maiden answered with ineffable impressiveness:—"Valerian, if thou wilt abide by my counsels, if thou consentest to be washed in the waters of eternal purification, if thou wilt believe in the true and only God, who reigns above in the heavens, thine eye may behold the Angel who watches over me to guard, defend, and protect me."

"And who is he that shall purify me, to the end that I may see thine Angel?" asked Valerian. Cecilia replied: "There is a venerable old man who purifies men, so that they may behold the Angel of God." "And where may I find this old man?" said Valerian. "Go forth from the city by the Appian Way," returned Cecilia; "proceed until thou reachest the third milliary column. There thou wilt find some poor creatures who ask alms of passers-by. These poor people are objects of my frequent interest; and my secret is known to them. As thou approachest them, salute them in my name, giving them my benediction, and say to them: 'Cecilia sends me to you, that you may conduct me to the holy Urban: I have a private message to convey to him.'—When thou comest into the presence of the sainted old man, repeat to him the words I have said unto thee: he will purify thee, and robe

thee in fresh white garments. At thy return, thou wilt find me still here awaiting thee; thou wilt behold the Angel, then become thy friend also; and thou wilt obtain from him all that thou shalt ask of him."

With the first dawn of day, Valerian set forth towards the retreat of Urban; and all fell out according as Cecilia had pre-described. He hastened back, clothed in the white baptismal garment of a new-made Christian; which however attracted no observation in the streets of Rome, where cloaks and tunics of that hue were no rarity. He went straight to the door of the chamber where he had left Cecilia, and softly opened it. On entering, he perceived her kneeling in prayer, while near to her stood the Angel of the Lord; his face radiant with celestial light; his wings with innumerable colours. The spirit of bliss held in his hand two coronals of intertwined roses and lilies. One of these he placed on the head of Cecilia, the other on that of Valerian, as he said, in heavenly accents, to the young couple:—"Deserve to keep these crowns by the purity of your hearts, and the sanctity of your bodies: it is from the garden of paradise that I bring them to you. These flowers will never fade, their perfume will be ever fresh and gracious; but no one will be able to behold them, save by meriting the privilege, like yourselves, through purity and implicitness to Heaven's will. Now, O Valerian, for thine acquiescence with the chaste aspiration of Cecilia, Christ, the Son of God, has sent me to thee, to hearken whatever boon thou desirest that he should grant."

The young man, full of pious gratitude, fell at the feet of the divine messenger, and thus ventured to utter his request:—"Nothing in life is more dear to me than the affection of my brother:—it would be cruel to me, who am now freed from peril, were this beloved brother to be left in danger of destruction. I beseech of

Christ to deliver my brother Tiburtius, as he hath delivered myself; and that he will render us worthy of Him in the confession of his name."—Then the Angel, turning to Valerian a face on which beamed the supreme joy that thrills the spirits of bliss at the sight of human virtue, replied:—"Because thou hast asked a boon of Christ that He is not less willing to bestow than thou to receive,—inasmuch as thy heart was turned to Him through Cecilia, His servant; so shalt thou win over the heart of thy brother, that both of you may attain the palm of martyrdom."

The Angel re-ascended to the skies, leaving Valerian and Cecilia to the plenitude of their holy gladness. They were still in beatific conversation, when Tiburtius came into the room, impatient to see his well-beloved brother Valerian, to whom Cecilia being now espoused, he saluted her affectionately as his sister. In stooping towards her to give her his fraternal kiss, he smelt the delicious fragrance that emanated from the maiden's beautiful hair, as of odorous spring flowers; yet it was then the winter season. An expression of surprise escaped him; and the young couple revealed to him the wondrous secret of the heavenly crowns they wore, imparting to him the means by which he might not only behold, but obtain one for himself. With the eagerness of the neophyte, Valerian poured forth his tale to his brother's ear; while with the confirmed ardour of the long faithful Christian, Cecilia uttered her persuasive exhortations to Tiburtius.

Their combined arguments produced the desired fruit; Tiburtius was no less desirous than they to fulfil his newly-awakened aspiration to become a Christian; and it was not long ere the two brothers repaired together to the holy Urban's retreat, to seek baptism for the young Roman, from the venerable pontiff's hand.

For a time, peacefulness and calm life were theirs; but on the

return of the vernal months, war called the Emperor Alexander Severus away from Rome, and the executive legal power was vested in the hands of deputy rulers during his absence. The man who filled the office of Præfectus urbis,—a civil function, differing from that of Præfectus prætorio,—was Turcius Almachius, notorious for the hatred he bore the Christians. No sooner, therefore, was the emperor gone, whose leniency to the sect was well known, than Almachius commenced a series of persecutions of unrelenting fury. His ferocious malignity first attacked the humbler classes of Romans who professed the denounced faith; and while he consigned their living bodies to torture and death, he denied to their dead bodies the posthumous consolation of ceremonious burial. He knew what importance the association attached to this final token of respect; and how frequently, in their zeal to render the last offices to their martyred brethren, they themselves incurred a similar fate. To repose amid that valorous phalanx of devotees, who had died for their faith, and who lay beneath the mould of the crypts in graves bearing the simple, but beautiful inscription of two emphatic words,—"*In pace*," was esteemed a privilege well worth risking life for.

Valerian and Tiburtius were among the most active of those who hazarded peril for the sake of giving Christian burial to Christian martyrs; and it was thus that they came to be denounced to Almachius as zealous partisans of the proscribed sect. He had the two brothers arrested, and brought before him; seeking to intimidate the young patricians before he proceeded to extremity with them.

But they both, with the nobleness and courage of their respective natures, scorned to avail themselves of the opportunity which the venal magistrate gave them for evading confession of their faith; they said enough to let it clearly be seen that they belonged

to the sect they favoured; and Almachius, unwilling to pronounce sentence of death against youths of their rank, condemned them to be scourged with rods. Finding that this failed to subdue them, he sentenced the brothers to be conducted to the fourth milliary column on the Appian Way, near to which there was a temple of Jupiter.

Here, they were to be asked to burn incense before the idol; and if they refused to do so, they were to suffer decapitation.

Ere Valerian could return home to say one word of farewell to Cecilia, he and his brother were led away to their ordeal; but it is said that she found means to meet them once more, on their way to the appointed spot, and that she had the courage to bid them go forth, as soldiers of Christ, and win their laurels of life eternal. They met death valorously; and the vigilance of some devoted friends among the faithful, secured to Cecilia the mournful privilege of enshrouding the mangled remains of Valerian and Tiburtius, and depositing them reverentially in a place of sepulture on the left side of the Appian Way.

Not long was Cecilia in following the two young brothers in their martyrdom. Soon she was summoned to appear before Almachius, in order that she might abjure her suspected faith; so far from this, however, her recorded colloquy with the tyrannous præfect, only served to proclaim her steadfast adherence to the creed she had adopted, and openly to avow herself that, which, secretly, she had long been,—a Christian.

He,—desirous that her death should be as private as possible, so as to avoid scandal and tumult, as well as possible reprehension from the emperor, should Severus come to learn what had taken place in his absence,—gave orders that Cecilia should be conducted back to her own mansion, and there shut up in the bath-room attached to it, called by the Romans the *caldarium*. A fire

was to be kept up in the hypocaust, or stove; so that the virgin martyr thus left without air, beneath the heated roof, would inhale death with the burning vapour, and obviate the necessity of a lictor coming to immolate her.

But the præfect's cowardly expedient failed. A miraculous atmosphere seemed to environ her; and, like the three who were cast into the fiery furnace, without a hair of their heads being singed, the saintly Cecilia remained in the heated bath scathless, awaiting until her Heavenly Spouse should call her to him.

This prodigy being reported to Almachius, he beheld his desire to avoid shedding the blood of a Roman lady frustrated; he therefore sent a lictor to behead her on the very spot where she had escaped death. So eagerly did the virgin martyr welcome the blow which was to deliver her from earthly bondage, that the executioner's energy was paralyzed, and his ill-assured arm could not strike with certainty at a victim thus submissively ready to encounter her fate. Thrice he brandished aloft his weapon, and thrice it fell with ineffectual force on the neck of Cecilia. An existing law forbade more than three blows dealt by the headsman; if the third did not kill, the sufferer was left to die. Thus the lictor left the virgin, stretched on the bath-room floor, weltering in her blood, mortally wounded, but not yet expiring.

The doors remaining open after the lictor's departure, a crowd of Christians who had been awaiting the consummation of the sacrifice, made their way in, struck with grief and horror. The gentle victim smiled faintly on those holy poor whom she had so long charitably cared for; and even in this supreme instant devoted herself to their cause by addressing kindly words of encouragement and exhortation to them to be firm in faith: and when they brought the venerable Urban to her side, she still showed her affection for them, by bequeathing to him her worldly goods

for their behoof. Thus lay she; to the last, exerting herself to utter consoling and hopeful words. Her young and virginal body lay prone, tenderly couched on its right side; her limbs laxly extended; her arms drooped one over the other patiently; her head bent meekly down. Thus she yielded her last sigh; and thus,—in this pathetic attitude of martyred maidhood, an Italian artist, Stefano Maderno, sculptured a marble figure of Saint Cecilia, which adorns her church at Rome.

Her remains were deposited by Pope Urban in the crypt which his predecessor, Calixtus, had prepared for the sepulchre of the pontiffs themselves beneath the Appian Way; and it was not until six centuries afterwards, that pope Paschal I. exhumed the virgin martyr's body, and caused it to be transported to her transtiberine basilica. On a subsequent occasion, when by Pontifical authority, the saint's tomb was again opened and examined, it is averred that the body was discovered in the same attitude and vesture it had worn at the moment of death; and then it was that Maderno's recumbent statue was sculptured as an effigy for her monument. A beautiful incident is related as attending this second homage to Saint Cecilia's remains; and it is in the true poetical spirit of Catholic reverence for legendary association. While the ceremony of opening the virgin martyr's coffin proceeded, the usual burning of incense in the sacred edifice was forborne; on account, as it was said, of leaving free to be perceived the delicious odour of *roses and lilies* that emanated in undying freshness from the shrine in which the saint's body reposed.

The legend of Saint Cecilia, is, throughout, one of the most lovely that the world's history records. It associates, in one form, some of the most noble and gracious of humanity's adornments: —youth, beauty, purity, harmony, holiness;—all have their share in this exquisite story.

Chaucer, with his taste for refined charm in simplicity, took it for one of his Canterbury Tales; and he has told it with his wonted grace. The two beautiful lines describing Cecilia's singing within herself, at the marriage feast, are well known:—

> "And while that the organs maden melody,
> To God alone thus in hire hert song she."

The point, describing Tiburtius entering the room where his brother and new-married sister have just had the interview with the Angel, is told with all the exquisite freshness of primitive innocence:—

> "And with that word Tiburce his brother come;
> And whan that he the savour undernome *
> Which that the roses and the lilies cast:—
> Within his heart he gan to wonder fast,
> And said;—'I wonder this time of the year
> Whennes that sweet savour cometh so,
> Of roses and lilies that I smel here:
> For though I had hem in min hondes two,
> The savour might in me no deper go:—
> The swetes smel that in min herte I find,
> Hath changed me all in another kind.'—
> Valerian said: 'Two corones han we,
> Snow-white and rose-red, that shinen clear,
> Which that thine eyen han no might to see:
> And as thou smellest hem thurgh my praiere,
> So shalt thou seen hem, leve brother dear,
> If it so be thou wilt, withouten slouthe
> Beleve aright and know the veray trouthe.'"

The early martyrdoms of the Christian Church afford beautiful subjects for dramatic, as well as poetic treatment; and it is a wonder that they have not more frequently been made themes of tragedy. Corneille has taken for the hero and title of one of his stately dramas, "Polyeucte," a martyr who suffered under the Em-

* Undernome—undertook—took in subordinately;—as it were, dimly perceived the scent of the flowers he could not see.

peror Decius, in the year 250; exactly two decades later than Saint Cecilia's martyrdom. They who have had the privilege of beholding the great tragic actress, Rachel, perform the part of Pauline, in this play, will have witnessed a wonderful embodiment of the early female martyrs, as we may conceive them to have appeared, when proclaiming their adherence to the proscribed faith, and prepared to seal belief with life-blood. Her entrance upon the stage in that simple white tunic,—like a victim ready to suffer at the stake,—her hair put back from her brow, her bare arms held to heaven, her face lustrous with the light of new-perceived truth,—was a vision, once seen, never to be forgotten, so long as memory lasts. And ineffably thrilling, too, that voice, in which she uttered those herald words:—

> Mon époux, en mourant, m'a laissé ses lumières ;
> Son sang, dont tes bourreaux viennent de me couvrir,
> M'a desillé les yeux, et me les vient d'ouvrir.
> Je vois, je sais, *je crois*, je suis désabusée ;
> De ce bienheureux sang tu me vois baptisée;
> Je suis CHRETIENNE enfin,—n'est-ce point assez dit ?"
>
> [My husband, in dying, has left me his faith ;
> His blood shed upon me by men without ruth,
> Hath unseal'd mine eyes, and shown me the truth ;
> I see, I know, *I believe*, my soul's new advis'd ;
> With this thrice blessed blood thou see'st me baptized ;
> I'm a CHRISTIAN, in short,—needs there more to be said ? "]

The tone and look that accompanied those two syllables, "Je crois," were incomparably fine—it was the very soul of fervent expression.

"Vivia Perpetua," another of the early Christian martyrs, forms the subject of a beautiful dramatic poem, which deserves to be widely known. It is by Sarah Flower Adams, a lady of refined taste, and earnest feeling, who had a sister gifted with a musician's talent; both fitting followers of Saint Cecilia in Art and in holy

aspiration; and both, like her, now dead. Two passages from the "Vivia Perpetua" may serve to show the poem's excellence, and to aptly illustrate the subject under discussion:—

Vivius. What is——a Christian?
Vivia. Truth above all,—it is the Christian's word;
Love over all,—it is the Christian's soul;
Life beyond all,—it is the Christian's hope:
To lay down life for Christ who liv'd
For Truth and Love, and died for Life Immortal,—
This is to be a Christian.—I am ready."

The second passage glowingly describes that spiritual desire for highest adoration, which burns within the human heart, and lends it a fire of faith strong enough to meet the fires of martyrdom unflinchingly:—

Vivia. "O, have you not
A life within, that asks another life
For its unfolding? Hast not felt thy soul
To swell and press against this limiting earth?
Hast never thirsted for a perfect Truth?
Hast never long'd to meet with what should fill
Full to its large desire thy sense of praise?
To praise—praise infinitely, were enough.
To dwell for ever with the Great Perfection,
The one untiring, ever-moving Spirit
Of Good,—what were it! Then to have reveal'd
By light, the element wherein he dwells,
His mighty plans, wrought out of one great law,
The law of Love. No longer mystery:
Faith turn'd to sight, as promis'd of the Lord.—
Think what joy, what loving adoration,
Would burst the song of praise from forth our souls,—
Praise that had gain'd increas'd intelligence,
To meet the work of His intelligence,—
When, with our upturn'd eyes, we reached the height,
Where, like the beams of his own sun on the mountain,
Rested the all-seeing gaze of the Creator,
Over the world he made; and he proclaim'd
That—All was good!"

The exact dates of neither Saint Cecilia's birth nor martyrdom, are known; it is merely ascertained that she met her doom in the spring of the year 230. But the day appointed for the commemoration of Saint Cecilia's anniversary, is the 22d of November; and it has been the graceful custom to celebrate the festival of the patron-saint of Music with a vocal and instrumental performance in her honour. A little volume, containing an account of these musical celebrations of Saint Cecilia's Day has lately been put forth by William Henry Husk; and among the collection of odes he has appended, Dryden's, Pope's, and Congreve's are those most distinguished in name. They are each characteristic of their several author's styles, although treating of the same theme. The passages strictly relative to Saint Cecilia herself, shall be quoted here, as affording illustrative evidence of this remark. First, Dryden's;—robust and vigorous:—

"Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
While organs yet were mute;
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;—
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarg'd the narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He rais'd a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down."

Then Pope's; smooth, neat, and well-turned:—

"Music the fiercest grief can charm,
And fate's severest rage disarm;
Music can soften pain to ease,
And make despair and madness please:

Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above.
This the divine Cecilia found,
And to her Maker's praise confin'd the sound.
When the full organ joins the tuneful quire,
Th' immortal pow'rs incline their ear:
Borne on the swelling notes, our souls aspire
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire;
And angels lean from Heav'n to hear.
Of Orpheus now no more let poets tell,
To bright Cecilia greater pow'r is giv'n
His numbers rais'd a shade from hell,
Her's lift the soul to Heav'n."

And lastly, Congreve's; courtly, polished,—almost as bowingly gallant as one of his own comedy fine gentlemen. We seem to see Dan Phœbus, in embroidered coat and ruffles—like Mirabell or Bellmour, at the feet of Millamant or Belinda—laying his harp and his laurels at the feet of Saint Cecilia, in the hoop-petticoat and powdered head-dress of Mrs. Bracegirdle:—

"Cecilia comes, with holy rapture fill'd,
To ease the world of care.
Cecilia, more than all the Muses skill'd,
Phœbus himself to her must yield,
And at her feet lay down
His golden harp and laurel crown;
The soft enervate lyre is drown'd
In the deep organ's more majestic sound.
In peals the swelling notes ascend the skies;
Perpetual breath the swelling notes supplies,
And lasting as her name
Who form'd the tuneful frame,
Th' immortal music never dies."

Saint Cecilia forms a blended impersonation of Christian faith, divine music and feminine purity.

HELOISE.

Hardly could a finer exemplar of the principle of self-abnegation be pointed out than Heloise. She formed an embodiment of that generous passion of love which prefers the honour of the beloved object to its own. That noble affection which lives and has its breath in the welfare of another—the chosen one. That affection whose ambition is exalted,—for it seeks the glory of another self, instead of self-aggrandizement; whose aspirations are all disinterested, having for aim the advantage of the beloved one, forgetful of personal distinction. Peculiarly a *womanly* affection,—content to merge all considerations of individual fame (even womanhood's fame itself) in that of the man preferred, proud of his renown, and humbly willing to remain obscure, and even defamed for his sake.

Her tragical history may be gathered from the celebrated "Letters" written by Abelard, and herself, which fortunately time has preserved; thus enabling us to trace, almost in autobiographical form (the incidents of the story in his, the inner essence, its truth of respective character in hers), the private particulars of two beings who played so conspicuous a part in the World's great Drama, seven centuries since. In Abelard's letter, which was addressed to a friend, who had suffered severe misfortune, and

whom he wished to inspire with fortitude, from a detail of griefs far exceeding those he strove to console, and indeed, almost unexampled in calamity,—are detailed the afflicting circumstances of his and Heloise's life up to that period; and in the letters of Heloise, are revealed the intimate vestiges of character, and moral conformation that marked each. Her own character is brightly visible in the warm outpourings of the woman-heart, overflowing through every line and every word; while that of Abelard is latently legible in the appeals she with such fervour and eloquence addresses to him.

Heloise was one of those women, in whom a strong intellect is combined with equal strength of feeling; in whom ardour of mind is co-existent with the most glowing generosity of soul. From childhood, she was distinguished by mental capacity and affectionate disposition. From earliest youth she applied herself to science and philosophy; and became mistress of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. Very beautiful, she diligently cultivated her understanding, which was naturally vigorous. She received her first education in the convent of Argenteuil, near Paris; and during girlhood, pursued her studies under the roof of her uncle, Fulbert, who was a canon in the cathedral of Paris, and almoner to King Henry I. of France.

Her uncle, proud of Heloise's attainments,—rare at any time in a woman, but especially so at the period when she lived,—which had already won her a name in the world, was eager to promote her tuition. When therefore Abelard appeared in Paris, in the full lustre of his scholastic reputation, and proposed to enter Fulbert's house as a boarder, giving instruction to the niece as an equivalent, the canon,—who was no less parsimonious than violent-tempered, caught at this proposal, which afforded so fair an opportunity of fulfilling his views. Abelard's own words remark upon

the rash folly of the canon's behaviour; thus "confiding," as it were, "a tender lambkin to the care of a famished wolf." The advantages to be gained by the plan so blinded Fulbert to its dangers, that he actually placed his young niece under the sole direction of her new preceptor; begging him to devote all the hours he could spare, to her instruction, and went so far as to empower Abelard not only to see her at all hours, but, if he found her negligent or inattentive, to use chastisement.

Thus, the designs of Abelard were offered every facility for success, by the imprudence of the uncle; and, placed in this constant proximity with his beautiful pupil, he failed not to take full advantage of his position. Heloise was but seventeen, when she first met Abelard; while he was a man of thirty-nine. Hers was the very age at which a girl of her temperament and her endowments, was likely to become enamoured of a man of his age and character. He came to her surrounded by all the influences of his learned reputation, his graces of person and manner, his scholarly and varied accomplishments. She herself makes touching allusion to this. It has an effect, as if recording to posterity her lover's talent, and appealing to it in extenuation of her early fault.

"Among the qualities that distinguished you," writes she to him many years afterwards, "you possessed two gifts especially, which must have won you the heart of any woman: I mean, those of poet and musician. I cannot think that these accomplishments were ever before possessed by a philosopher in equal degree. It was thus, that, as a relaxation from your philosophical studies, you composed, by way of pastime, numberless verses and love-songs, whose poetic thought and musical grace, found an echo in every heart. Your name flew from mouth to mouth; and your stanzas remained graven in the memory of even the most ignorant, by the sweetness of your melodies. And ah! in consequence, how the

hearts of all the women were drawn towards you! But as the greater number of your verses sang our love, my name soon became distinguished, and then the envy of women was roused."

The classical reading of Heloise had habituated her to imbibe her ideas of right and wrong from such precepts as she found in the pages of the ancients. She had no mother, no female guide near her to counsel and advise; no friend at hand to point out where a girl might run fearfullest hazard in forming her conduct solely upon the tenets of such authors as she read. Aided by womanly admonitions, Heloise might have reaped wholesome advantage from her studies, and learned to gather fuller and wiser meaning from them. As it was, she may be imagined to have made her own crude and too-large construction of such books as she studied; and that from this—joined with her own generous nature—she grew to be over-reliant and confiding, where she gave her heart. It is probable that her girlish enthusiasm implicitly interpreted passages like the following one from Plato:—"For when the lover and the beloved have once arrived at the same point, the province of each being distinguished; the one able to assist in the cultivation of the mind and in the acquirement of every other excellence; the other yet requiring education, and seeking the possession of wisdom; then alone, by the union of these conditions, and in no other case, is it honourable for the beloved to yield up the affections to the lover."

From his character of professor of divinity, numbering among his scholars those who subsequently proved some of the most eminent men of the time—(a pope, nineteen cardinals, more than fifty archbishops and bishops, among ecclesiastics; and the almost incredible number of five thousand disciples in all, are asserted to have owed their education to Abelard's school of instruction)—from his high reputation—from being one of the most able dialec-

ticians and keen disputants then living—from his attractions of person and manner, then in the prime of mature manhood—from his more refined and tasteful acquirements combined with knowledge,—Abelard could scarcely fail of becoming master of the whole heart and mind of a girl whose previous pursuits had moulded her to a loving reverence for intellectual supremacy. Her reading had made the ancient philosophers her book-idols; and now she beheld embodied before her their living representative in this gifted man, possessed not only of their powers, but of a handsome person, a most winning tongue, and an all-absorbing passion for herself. Well skilled in the arts of casuistry, practised in the subtlest and smoothest forms of sophistry, he was at no loss to beguile the judgment, while he fascinated the affections of his willing conquest. From being pupil, Heloise became mistress to the man she loved better than herself; and, from that time, made his will—not her own—the rule of her life. The uncle—obtuse as he was rash—was the last to discover their intercourse; and when he did—rash as he was obtuse—burst into fury against this shame to his family, and reproached Heloise with making herself and him the scandalous talk of Paris. The lovers were separated for a time; but Abelard took advantage of a temporary absence of Fulbert's, to convey Heloise away, disguised as a man, into Brittany, where she remained with a sister of Abelard's called Denise, and there gave birth to a son, whom she named Astrolabus.

Fulbert's rage knew no bounds at this public proof of domestic infamy; and Abelard, to appease his wrath, went to him, and offered to repair the injury his family honor had sustained by marrying Heloise, on condition that the union should be kept a secret. Repenting the act of treachery he had committed, Abelard was willing to make the only reparation in his power; but knowing that it involved the ruin of all his hopes of ecclesiastical

preferment, and even—constituted as letters then were—the destruction of all his literary ambition and prospects of learned fame, he affixed this condition to his proffer of redress. Fulbert readily promised compliance, only too rejoiced to secure a proposal beyond his utmost expectation; for such a marriage, besides salving his wounded reputation, would secure his niece's union with a man whose scholastic renown rendered his alliance a high distinction.

But the person most nearly interested in the project, viewed it with far less selfish eyes. Abelard, on arriving in Brittany to communicate what her uncle and himself had agreed upon between them, found Heloise wholly averse from the proposed marriage. Ever more solicitous for him than for herself, she foresaw, in this step, his ruin, and she chose rather to abide by her own. He had already taken degrees in clerical office; and the clergy of his persuasion are prohibited from wedlock. She knew, that were he to marry, all hope of advancement as an ecclesiastic was precluded; and she was aware that unless ordained, his prospects of attaining fame as a man of letters were at once quenched. Literary eminence was at that time almost wholly confined to the priesthood; and, were Abelard to put it out of his power to become a dignitary of the church, he could hardly dream of acquiring that renown which his talents were sure to command, had they free scope for their exercise.

Heloise placed all these inducements before her lover; urged all the arguments which her erudition could so well supply from philosophical and theological authority, that might prevail with him to give up the thought of taking a wife;—she cited the Apostle's words, the Saint's exhortations against assuming the yoke of marriage; represented the loss which the church would sustain, and the detriment philosophy would suffer, if so shining a light as Abelard's genius were withdrawn from them; and, in short, left no plea unadvanced which could support his cause against her own.

She even went so far as to assure him that she would prefer owing all to his love and voluntary faith, unshackled by any tie. With a woman's romance of generosity—in striving to persuade him into what she thought would be for his best advantage—she made it seem her own wish that they should remain united by affection only, without the ties of marriage.

This piece of prodigal self-abnegation has been curiously misconceived. In judging so exceptional a character as that of Heloise, it is impossible to gauge it by ordinary rules; but conventional minds will pronounce conventionally, however singularly above their own the mind they contemplate. With tears and prayers she sought to dissuade Abelard from making the sacrifice he meditated; but finding that he was bent upon its fulfilment, she yielded to his will—as she did from first to last in all things—and accompanied him back to Paris, that the marriage might be privately performed.

Here, a few days after their return, having passed the whole night in a secluded church, praying with holy vigil and pious observance, Abelard and Heloise went through the nuptial ceremony in presence of her uncle and a few trusted friends; quitting each other immediately it had taken place, living separately in great retirement, and seeing each other but rarely, and with every precaution, in order to keep their marriage concealed.

But Fulbert, forgetful of all his promises, and thoughtful only of the affront his family honor had received, lost no time in spreading the fact of the marriage, as publicly as possible, to efface the former scandal. Heloise, on the contrary, solicitous only for Abelard's interest, and convinced that his being known as a married man would annihilate his advancement, persisted in denying the circumstance. Her uncle, furious at her steadfast adherence to her views of what was right; enraged that she should be more careful

of another's reputation than her own, and jealous of her deference to any authority but his—for he suspected Abelard of actuating her conduct—vowed to make his niece repent her pertinacity; and as she resided in the same house with him, he had no difficulty in carrying his threat into effect. Abelard, coming to the knowledge of Fulbert's harshness towards his niece, rescued her from this treatment by taking her away from the canon's house, and placing her in the convent of Argenteuil, where she had been brought up. This step only the more roused Fulbert's wrath, who saw in it, as he thought, the desire of a villain to rid himself of a woman's claims to be acknowledged as his wife, by inducing her to become a nun. Blindly rash and violent as ever—goaded into ferocity now—he planned a vengeance of pre-eminent cruelty and wickedness. He found means to execute his barbarous scheme, by bribing Abelard's servant to admit some hired ruffians into his master's chamber at midnight, who there committed a foul deed which left the unhappy husband no other resource than to retire into a monastery, and grieve out the remainder of his life in seclusion and celibacy. Heloise, not only sharing, but anticipating his immolation, took the veil at Argenteuil; and then Abelard became a monk in the Abbey of St. Denis. In their cloistered life, as in their worldly sojourn, the natures of the two were conspicuously marked by difference of individual character. Heloise shines nobly the superior, in generosity, unselfish conduct, heroic devotion, firm faith, and constancy of heart. While Abelard—restless and miserable—fretted against the horrors of his fate, passing a feverish existence of alternate squabbles with his monks, burning regrets for his lost happiness, vain attempts to gain the power and honor which his talent entitled him to obtain; Heloise set herself bravely and in earnest to the task of subduing her emotions, disciplining her soul to resignation, and endeavouring not only to preach peace

and virtue but to practise them. At St. Denis, and afterwards at St. Gildas, Abelard rebuked the disorders of the respective communities; but with so little effect, that in the former place, the monks conspired to accuse him of high treason and heresy, and compassed the condemnation of one of his theological works, which was publicly burned at Soissons; while, in the latter place, the brotherhood resented his interference so virulently, as to seek his destruction by poison. Finding that his suspicions were aroused sufficiently to make him examine ordinary food, they sacrilegiously infused poison into the consecrated wine at the very altar: and on another occasion, one of his attendants chancing to eat of what had been prepared for his meal, died on the spot.

Heloise—who had also had her difficulties to contend with in the shape of conventual disorderliness and refractory members among the sisterhood, after bearing the ignominy of being expelled in company with them from the convent of Argenteuil, although her own conduct was blameless—found refuge in the Oratory of Paraclete, and succeeded in establishing regularity among the nuns, whose abbess she became. This Oratory of Paraclete had been built by Abelard; and by him was she installed there. After eleven years of separation, they met on the occasion of the consecration of the community. The husband and wife—the married lovers, fate-divorced for life—met after eleven years of mutual unextinguished passion, and unquenched regret. But their respective relations were now so changed as to subdue all token of what passed within the sanctuary of these closed hearts. God alone can know the emotions that surged beneath the outward calm of the Monk's frock and cowl, the Abbess's veil and habit. He was the superior and pastor; she the holy recluse. Abelard's own words record the exemplary conduct of Heloise in her appointed station here. He says:—"The Abbot of St. Denis reclaimed as an ap-

purtenance formerly subjected to the jurisdiction of his monastery the convent of Argenteuil, where my Heloise—for some time past my sister in Christ Jesus rather than my wife—had taken the veil. Hardly was she appointed Abbess there, when he violently expelled the community of nuns over which she presided. Beholding them thus driven out to exile and dispersion, I conceived that the Lord presented me an occasion of establishing my Oratory. I repaired thither, and invited Heloise and such of her community of nuns as remained attached to her person to come and take possession. On their arrival, I made them a donation of the entire Oratory and its dependencies, and after this donation, by the consent and intervention of the Bishop of the diocese, Pope Innocent II. confirmed to them by privilege its possession in perpetuity, to them and those who should follow them. They lived here some time, poor, and only too desolate. But a ray of Divine mercy, which they so devoutly implored, did not fail to reach them. The Lord, the true Paraclete (the Consoler), touched with pity the hearts of the surrounding population, and inspired kindness towards them. One single year multiplied around them the products of the earth more, I veritably think (God only knows), than a hundred years would have done for me, had I remained there in their place. For inasmuch as the female sex is feebler than ours, so their distress is more moving, and affects more readily the hearts of their fellow-creatures; and as in the eyes of mankind, so likewise to God, is their virtue more acceptable. Thus, the Lord, in his goodness towards our dear sister, who directed her companions, permitted her to find favour in the eyes of every one. The Bishops cherished her like a daughter, the clergy like a sister, the laity like a mother; and all equally admired her fervent piety, her wisdom, and her incomparable gentleness and patience in all things. She was seldom seen, keeping retired within her cell, that she might

devote herself the more exclusively to her holy meditations and prayers: but this only made those around her the more eagerly solicitous to obtain her presence, and the pious instruction derived from her conversation."

Abelard, a prey to disappointment, irritable from misfortune, had not the temper successfully to controul those under his government, nor to subdue those who were his enemies. These latter pursued their accusations of heresy; and he resolved to defend himself from the charge before the council. He was again condemned; and he then determined to appeal to the Pope. Journeying for this purpose, he halted at Cluni, where he was hospitably received by Peter the Venerable, abbot there. The good ecclesiastic soothed his griefs, and strove to appease his foes. He persuaded Abelard to cease from contention, to retire from controversy, to withdraw from the vexations and strifes of existence, and to stay and end his days with him at Cluni. Abiding here in the strictest retirement, practising the austerities of the order with the utmost rigour, exciting admiration by his penitence and marked humility, he died two years after, in 1142.

After the death of Abelard, Heloise obtained permission from Peter the Venerable, to have the remains of her husband conveyed to Paraclete, where they were accordingly interred. She survived him; but held thenceforth no communication with the world. She ceased to correspond with her friends; and wrote them no more letters. She spoke no word thereafter, save in prayer or in instruction. She never again pronounced the name of Abelard; and allowed her heart to revert to the past only when communing with God. She dedicated herself with fervour to all the observances of her order, fulfilling its several penances, and undergoing its most rigid discipline. She revised and confirmed those ordinations for the ruling of her convent, and for the conduct of her nuns, which

she had laid down with so much care and judgment; and the substance of these ordinations proclaims her own admirable nature, and noble-hearted courage. Never did woman, betrayed into a single weakness in early youth, expiate it subsequently by strength of repentance and moral valour more completely than Heloise. He latter life was a fine act of self-redemption. She spent it, not in fruitless murmurs, or doleful lamentations; but in humble, yet energetic effort, she sought to improve those around her, while meekly chastening her own spirit. She turned her former fault into a source of leniency and forbearance towards others, while sincerely repenting it herself; and used her sorrows as a means of ennobling, not of enervating her heart. She made them teach her unselfishness, not selfishness. She made them help her to *sustain*, not to *reproach* him, who although their source, was equally with herself their sufferer. She made them enable her to bury within her own soul her agony of martyred love, and rather try to assuage her husband's murdered happiness by assumed composure, than complain of her wifehood's death. Heloise is a type of womanly fortitude in affection—strong in passion—strong in generous forgetfulness of self—strong in endurance—strong in faith—strong in constancy. She was strong in intellect, and strong in good sense,—not always the same thing. She commanded the respect and esteem of those who knew her; and won their lasting regard. She was revered and loved by the sisterhood of Paraclete, who owed their welfare to her discretion and prudent governance. She became an object of edification to the world; was loaded with benefits by princes and potentates; and possessed the steady friendship of Peter the Venerable.

She died Abbess of Paraclete, the 17th of May, 1164, aged sixty-three, twenty-two years after her husband Abelard. It was exactly the number of years between their respective ages; and it

seemed as if she merely survived him that period, to bring them together in all respects. At her own request, Heloise was buried in the same tomb with her husband; and here they were at length re-united in death. The beautiful belief of the time—more true in the essence of its imaginative and poetical creed than much of the present prosaic literality—averred that when Heloise's body was laid beside that of her wedded lover, his arms opened to receive her. Many learned men of the time affirmed the circumstance, and bore testimony to its being fact. The very point of its being stated—even invented—proves the grand force of mutual attachment recognized as existing between the two. They were known to be so united by love for each other, though cruelly severed by fate during life, that it seemed as if their ultimate joining by death *must* be marked by some visible sign of welcome—some token of joy beyond the course of mortal operation. The grave closed their griefs, and crowned their wish, by restoring them once more and for ever to each other's arms, together to enjoy eternity of peace and love.

The tastefully designed Gothic tomb which received the remains of Abelard and Heloise, was constructed from the cloistral ruins of Paraclete, and brought to Paris at the beginning of the present century; subsequently it was placed (in 1817) in the cemetery of Père-la-chaise, where it still stands—a shrine of interest to visitors from all parts of the globe.

It has been well said of Heloise by one of her biographers,—"She is one of the personages of the twelfth century whom we know most, but not best." She stands forth generally as an object of *pity*, rather than of *admiration;* she is remembered in her errors and her misfortunes, rather than in her expiation and her courage. She is celebrated for her learning, instead of for her strength of understanding. She has come down to us through the

medium of fiction, instead of in her own fine reality. Poets and romance-writers have presented her to our fancy invested with attributes for compassion, rather than for veneration. They have disguised—nay, disfigured her with their adornments, instead of letting us see her in her simple beauty of plain truth. Her own letters reveal her high-minded warmth of feeling; as her life exhibits her noble character. Her style is esteemed a model of elegant latinity for the age in which she lived;—it is animated, energetic; and where her heart, speaks the language is fervent, emphatic and natural.

Of the language, of the mere diction and construction of the Latin in which these letters are written, scholarly men are, of course, the most competent judges; but it is, perhaps, only a woman, who can truly discern the intrinsic spirit—what Shakespeare so finely calls "the inly touch of love"—of these letters. It almost requires a woman's heart to penetrate the core of womanhood resident in these letters of Heloise. They are so instinct with that involuntary shrinking and veiling of the secret depths of passionate feeling—even when most impulsively uttering its irrepressible emotions—which characterize a woman's writing, that scarcely any man can correctly read its more delicate shades of meaning. That still farther reserve of tenderness which always lies beneath the most unreserved expressions of tenderness in a woman, teaching her to adopt a mode of utterance that conveys but imperfect representation of her heart's workings, demands feminine insight to perceive its full extent. No man but one ever deciphered the soul of womanhood in its entirety, in its hidden involutions, as in its outward demonstrations; and that one was William Shakespeare. In the letters of Heloise are to be descried this intuitive reticence of the womanly nature, conjoined with the singularly bold outspeaking of her time. It is this plain out-

speaking, this straightforward usage of words and terms, which that age sanctioned, and which the custom of writing in Latin aided in producing, which has greatly served to blind those who have hitherto judged Heloise by these letters, to the internal evidence they afford of her character. The plain terms she uses, convey to modern ideas, an impression of grossness; whereas, they were no more than what those, well versed in philosophical discussion and doctrinal disputation, constantly employed. Besides this circumstance, the involuntary subterfuge of womanhood above alluded to, —and which is not so much a conscious withholding of the whole truth as an instinctive sensitiveness, and generous desire to reveal but that which shall render homage to him who is beloved, instead of asserting the claim of her who loves—has tended to keep the inwarder sense of Heloise's eloquent epistles as yet undiscovered. Some of the ablest biographers and essayists have expressed wonder at certain of her sentiments and acts; not perceiving the true interpretation they bear. For instance, one of the most esteemed among those who have written upon this subject, confesses himself at a loss to account for the long silence maintained by Heloise during the years which first followed her retreat into a cloister, and to conceive the reason which at length induced her to break this silence, by addressing that letter (the first) to Abelard. The essayist does not seem to perceive that two causes served to hold that noble heart in mute sufferance:—first, its entire resignation to the will of its possessor—an obedient resignation which formed the principles of her whole conduct; and secondly, the profound wound that her love had received, which made passive endurance her only resource. He whom she had elected controuller of her destiny, had willed her life-burial, and she buried her griefs with herself in dumb submission to his decree. The reason of her breaking silence, was the sudden coming to a knowledge of

his griefs, of the long years of tortured misery he had gone through, the perpetual harass and disappointment he had sustained, the existing perils which beset him even while he wrote, which forced from her that passionate outburst of long-pent feeling. His letter to a friend, detailing the history of his injuries, of his sorrows, and of his anxieties, chanced to fall into Heloise's hands, and she could no longer resist the irrepressible impulse to write to him. The intense feeling—the vital freshness of blood-warm emotion imbuing every sentence of that letter, drew hot tears from eyes that perused it for the first time—seven ages after the words were penned. They flowed straight from the heart of the woman-writer, and they went straight to the heart of the woman-reader. "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin;" and that touch of kindred womanhood struck with sympathetic vibration through long cycles of the world's revolution; creating direct intercommunion between a breather of the twelfth century, and one of the nineteenth in sistership of compassionate interest.

There is another point upon which the generality have failed to comprehend this great-souled woman. The motive of Heloise's refusal to sanctify her attachment by marriage, has been strangely misunderstood and misrepresented: and instead of the spirit of self-sacrifice which evidently dictated it, the relaters of her sad story have attributed her act to caprice of will, and licence of sentiment. Pope, in his celebrated epistle, "Eloisa to Abelard," confirms this misconstruction of her motive, in those meretricious lines:—

> "How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,
> Curse on all laws but those which love has made.
> Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
> Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.—
> Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,
> August her deed, and sacred be her fame;
> Before true passion all those views remove;

Fame, wealth, and honour! What are you to Love?
The jealous God, when we profane his fires,
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all;
Nor Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;—
No, make me mistress to the man I love;
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee."

Not by the wild irregular impulse, here conveyed, was she actuated, but by the purely generous desire to promote the fame and honour of her lover at the expense of her own; for not only did she object to marry him, but she denied her marriage after it had taken place, because she believed it would be an impediment to Abelard's advancement. So far from being a woman subject to weakness, and swayed by inclination, she possessed remarkable power over her feelings.

She was a woman of strong passions, with wonderful command over them; their very strength proving the force of mind she could exercise when called upon to subjugate them. The ascendancy which Abelard possessed over her young heart and imagination, and the generous preference she ever gave his wishes and his interests to her own, existed unchanged through her whole life. The same prodigality of affection which occasioned her to sacrifice maiden fame to his persuasions, and caused her to relinquish the privilege of being acknowledged his wife, made her willingly accede to his desire that she should quit the world, and immure herself in a cloister, when he found himself compelled to retire into a monastery. The prompt obedience she showed in this instance, contrasts nobly with the unworthy doubt of her which this conduct betrayed. His selfish exaction was best rebuked and shamed

by her immediate yielding. The injurious mistrust implied in his wishing her profession as a nun to *precede* his taking the vows of a monk, was none the less felt by her because she at once deferred to its dictate; but with her native warmth of character, she embraced this as an occasion of yet another act of self-devotion to him she loved. Moreover, knowing that to her the world was dead, she was content, still living, to become as one dead thenceforth. The errors of Heloise's passion are almost merged in its excess; and well-nigh forgiven in its constancy. The fortitude, the heroic firmness with which she accepted the lot assigned to her, and the subsequent courage and calm with which she sought to render it a means of expiation in sustained performance of duty, amount to the sublime of human endeavour. Distorted by the medium through which his grosser perceptions viewed them, it was from the two first of Heloise's original letters that Pope took the ground-work of his "Epistle" above-quoted. But—if the opinion may be given without presumption—the favour which the poet's version (or rather vulgar travestie*) has met with, is surely rather to be attributed to the neat quotable couplets with which the poem abounds, than to any fidelity of transcript it affords of that noble woman's sentiments. How poorly does the illicit love-rant in which Pope's heroine bemoans her *own* departed joys compare with the generous warmth of feeling and concentrated force of expression with which Heloise declares her acute sense of their mutual misery—of *his* anguish, *his* afflictions. How pronely, yet how nobly does she assert her readiness to abide by any decree of Abelard's, and share his utmost rigour of fate, exclaiming: "I who without hesitation, God knows, would have either followed or

* Such an interpretation of the letter of Heloise, was to be looked for from the man who libelled his whole sisterhood with the well-known axiom: "Every woman is at heart a rake."

preceded you into the burning gulphs of the earth, if such had been your good pleasure!" Infinitely pathetic and solemn is that "God knows!" And she says, with an ardour, heightened by the very simplicity of the words, "For my soul was not with myself, but with thee." Even more energetic is the effect in the original Latin terseness;—"non enim mecum animus meus, sed tecum erat."

This sentence, in fact, contains the key to Heloise's whole course of action. To please him, to fulfil what he wished, she placed her very being at his disposal. In one passage she says, with her own strength of expression:—"I struck my senses themselves with interdict to obey your will. My whole ambition has been to become thus, and above all things, your property." The humility, the lowliness with which she casts herself at the very foot of his love, so that it will but accept hers in its perfect devotion, is the absolute transcript of womanly affection. With this clue to Heloise's self-transfer and self-prostration in her love for Abelard, should be read the passage in her first letter, which has been so superficially judged to afford proof of her licence of inclination with regard to the marriage-tie. Wonder has been expressed that she should prefer being a mistress to a wife; and it has been pronounced extraordinary that she should rather live shamed than righted. It is far more wonderful that they should not see, that it is any thing but her own preference she is pleading for, and that it is his honour that occupies her thought instead of hers. Let the words speak for themselves, in their simple integrity; nay, even in their old-world plainness and out-spoken freedom. The heart-felt earnestness of their writer will excuse them with those hearts capable of feeling that where the sentiment is sincere, it signifies not whether it be clothed in the candour of the antique fashion, or veiled in the more decorous language of modern refinement.

Thus writes Heloise to her husband:—"Never, God knows, have I sought in you other thing than yourself. It is you, you alone, not your possessions that I loved. I thought not of rights of wedlock, nor of dowry, nor of my pleasures or my inclinations; it is yours, you well know, that I have studied to satisfy. Although the name of wife be deemed more holy and more strong, another would always have been dearest to my heart—that of your mistress; and—shall I say it without shocking you?—that of your concubine or your leman; hoping, that the more I made myself humble and of small account, the more should I raise myself in grace and favour with you, and that, contenting myself with this lot, *I should the less fetter your glorious future.*"

"I thank you for having not entirely forgotten all my sentiments on this subject in the letter addressed to your friend for his consolation. You have not disdained to recapitulate some of the motives which actuated me in striving to dissuade you from this fatal union; but you have passed over in silence almost all the reasons which made me prefer love to marriage; liberty to indissoluble bonds. I take God to witness, that if Augustus, supreme master of the universe, had offered me the signal honour of his alliance, placing at my feet the empire of the whole world, I would have accepted with more joy and pride the name of your paramour than the title of empress. *For neither riches nor power constitute a man's superiority: in the one case it is the effect of fortune; in the other, that of merit.*" It is this last clause of Heloise's protest that explains her sentiment. They who discover mere flagitious propensity and perverted appetite in Heloise's declaration that she would rather be Abelard's mistress than Cæsar's empress, read the isolated sentence without its context. She proclaims her individual preference for the sole man in the world who she feels to be worthy of her love and possessed of her love; and it is this exclu

siveness of attachment which she believes authorizes her utmost prodigality of demonstration. When she asserts that she would rather bear the name of mistress than wife, it is because she feels that the former lets her owe all to Abelard's favor, and the latter will shackle his career. Self-abasement is her pride, if it serve to win his love; self-transfusion into an embodiment of his will is that which she desires, so that his content is secured.

The very words with which Heloise continues her argument for claiming supremacy of merit to be the sole ground on which a woman's preference for a man should be based, proves the purity of her love-creed, and evidences that she holds individuality of affection to be that which hallows its unreserved bestowal. She goes on to say:—"The woman who espouses more willingly a rich man than a poor man, and who seeks in a husband his rank rather than himself, let this woman be sure she is for sale. Assuredly she who is biased by such calculation to engage in matrimony, may be entitled to the market-price, but not to any tenderness of gratitude; for it is very certain that she regards fortune, and not the person of her husband; and that she moreover regrets not having been able to prostitute herself to a more wealthy purchaser."

Let the reader fairly say, whether the open speaking of Heloise does not justify itself, by the honesty and veritable delicacy of the doctrine set forth. The mingling of intense feeling with unselfish thought for him addressed, was never more vividly exhibited. Her appeals are made in the most generous spirit, while within them may be traced the involuntary cries of a heart that feels itself scarcely yet understood, even by the man to whom it is wholly given. Men cannot comprehend that yearning for the tenderness of love, when the passion of love is denied, which women feel. Men, when deprived of the passionate expression of their affection, feel as if all were lost, and nothing less contents them; but a

woman can rest satisfied with deprivation of personal assurance of her lover's fondness, if she possess undoubted proof that his tenderness of attachment,—his love remains securely hers. And with what exquisite tact of delicate subtlety does Heloise convey this desire of her woman's soul! How she begins by conjuring Abelard in the name of her sisterhood as well as herself, and gradually,—as her pen warms into more individual fervour as she goes on,—how insensibly does she fall into the more exclusive form of address. She beseeches him to write to her and her nuns; and while entreating it as a relief to their anxiety for his safety, betrays how the feminine instinct, the desire to yield consolation, actuates the request. She says:—"In the name of Christ, who still reserves you for his service, and whose lowliest servants we are as well as yours,—ah! we conjure you, deign to write to us frequently. Tell us, amid what shipwrecks you are still tossing, we need to know them. We alone remain to you in this world; let us take part in your sorrows, as in your joys. Wounded spirits find some consolation in the compassion they inspire; a burden sustained by many is borne more easily, and seems more light. If this tempest should abate, hasten,—hasten your letters; we cannot be too soon re-assured. Whatever be their contents, they cannot but do us good, since they will at least prove that you hold us in remembrance.

"How sweet it is to receive a letter from an absent friend! Seneca teaches us this from his own example, when he writes to Lucilius:—'You write to me often, and I thank you; for you show yourself to me in the only manner possible to you. I never receive one of your letters, but we are immediately together.' If the portraits of our absent friends gently beguile our sight, and charm the regrets of absence by a vain phantom of consolation, what far more lively joy should we not feel in receiving letters which bring us the actual impress of the absent friend!

"Thanks be to heaven, these means still remain to you for affording us your presence; malice does not forbid it to you, no obstacle interposes; let not delay, I beseech you, arise from your negligence.

"You have written to your friend a long consolation, with a view to his misfortunes, it is true, but touching yours. While thus minutely recalling them to console him, you have greatly added to our affliction: while seeking to assuage his hurts, you have opened new wounds in our grief, and you have widened the old ones. Heal, in mercy, the sufferings you have inflicted, since you pour balm on those that others have caused. You have soothed the sorrows of a friend, of a companion, and you have discharged the debt of friendship and close intimacy; but your obligation towards us is still more sacred: for it is not friendship we feel towards you, but adoration and worship; we are not your companions, but your daughters; and if there be a name yet more tender and more holy 'tis that becomes us. As to the importance of the debt which engages you to us, is it needful to dwell on proof and evidence, as if of any thing doubtful? After God, you are the sole founder of this retreat, the sole architect of this Oratory, the sole creator of this community. You have not built upon a foundation already made; all here is your work. This solitude, frequented only by wild animals and robbers, had never known human habitation, had never possessed a single house. Upon the very dens of wild beasts, upon the very haunts of marauders, here, where the name of the Lord had never been heard, you raised a divine tabernacle, a temple dedicated to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. For this work you never had recourse to the wealth of kings or princes, when you might have obtained aught you demanded, in order that nothing of what was done might owe its existence to any but yourself. Clerks and scholars came in crowds to profit by your instruc-

tions, and furnished you with the necessary means; and those who lived by the benefices of the church, accustomed to receive rather than to make offerings, those who till then had hands only for taking and not for giving, became profuse and importunate in their liberalities. This new plantation in the field of the Lord is then truly your property. It is filled with young plants which require watering that they may flourish. This plantation is weakly from the very circumstance of its being of female growth: it is feeble, even were it not newly set."

Thus does she seek to interest him in their young community; while, with true womanly sentiment, glorying in attributing all they now possess, to him and his pious exertions. The words with which she concludes this portion of her letter, are beautifully characteristic. "You, who do so much for your enemies, remember what you owe to us, your daughters. And without speaking of my sisters here, I claim your debt towards myself:—*perchance you will be more eager to recompense at once these women who have given themselves to God, in the person of her who gave herself solely to you.*"

How involuntarily in the sentences that follow, does the woman's heart betray its deep-hidden sense of bruise and injury, while asking spiritual consolation; how the secret pain, crushed down in silence for so many years of outward patience and submission, speaks in throes of agony through those calls for comfort,—the comfort that the assurance of his love in unchanged tenderness and regard for her can alone bring. How unwillingly, even to herself, has she owned the keen sense of his lessened thought of her, yet how irresistibly it presses upon her, and with what self-existent force it penetrates through her words. Thus she proceeds:—"The numerous and extensive treatises which the holy Fathers have composed with so much zeal for the instruction, for the en-

couragement, and even for the consolation of nuns, your vast erudition acquaints you with better than our helplessness. And it is not without some painful wonder that I have remarked your long forgetfulness of those kindly commencements you made in our conversion. Oh my master! nothing has moved you on our behalf, neither Christian charity, nor your love for us, nor the example of the Holy Fathers. You have abandoned me in my tottering faith, and in the deep dejection of my soul. Your voice hath not rejoiced mine ear, your letters have not consoled my solitude.

"Yet you know the sanctity of the duties which your engagements impose upon you. Hath not the sacrament of marriage united us to each other? And what claims are wanting upon your affection for me, if it be true that in the face of heaven and earth I have always burned for you with a love unlimited? Dear—dear—you know, and no one is ignorant of it, that in losing you, I have lost all."

The repetition of that simple title, "Dear—dear," is ineffably moving in its pathos of eloquence: it is like her heart sobbing forth its irrepressible sense of loss and woe. It reminds one of the knell that rings in Milton's beautifully mournful iteration:—"Now thou art gone! Now thou art gone!" which has struck upon so many bereft hearts with sympathy of lament in reading the "Lycidas."

Elsewhere Heloise says with generous compunction, and with the same under-current of appeal, seeking to awaken his tenderness while tenderly and humbly pouring forth her own undying love for him:

"How dear have I cost you! And yet, most innocent was I, you know. Crime consists not in deed, but in intention. Justice does not weigh the event, but the thought which produced it.

You, who alone have been the object of my every sentiment, can alone judge them. I abide by your sentence—I leave myself to your verdict."

The conclusion of this finely eloquent letter is worthy to form its climax. It is solemn in its characteristic fervour and simplicity, dignity, and humility:—"By that God Himself, to whom you have consecrated yourself, I conjure you to restore me your presence in the only manner possible to you; that is to say, by the consoling virtue of a letter. Thus re-animated, I shall at least be able to apply myself with more fervency to the Divine service. Formerly, when you sought to win me into mundane enjoyments, you plied me ceaselessly with letters; each day your lays placed your Heloise in every mouth; every place, every house rang with my name. This eloquence, of old employed to incite me to terrestrial pleasures, shall it not now dedicate itself to the holy purpose of drawing me towards Heaven? Once again, bethink you of the duty you owe; consider what I ask: and I conclude this long letter by a brief close. Farewell—you are all to me."

Abelard's reply was couched in equally characteristic terms. It shows the man to us in visible form—the egoist, the clever dialectician, the expert sophist, with just the touch of pedantry belonging to his conscious attainments, and his pugnacious disposition. He was proud of his intellectual strength, and loved to prove it in intellectual combats; he felt his erudite superiority, and was fond of opportunity for evincing it to the world. His habit of doctrinising and dogmatising not only made him ever on the fret for demonstrating his learned knowledge in public, but it led him into perpetual quotation in his private letters. He even imbued his pupil, Heloise, with this addiction to the citing of authorities, from the ancient classic writers in philosophy, and from the Fathers of the Church in controversy. She quotes Seneca and St. Jerome in

the course of her letters to Abelard; and he mentions that in the very act of taking the veil, she ejaculated amid sobs and tears the complaint of Cornelia, from Lucan's "Pharsalia." In Abelard's answer to Heloise's first letter, we behold him grave, staid, almost reproving—the austere monk, the admonitory pastor. He absolves himself from the charge of neglecting her and her sisterhood, on the plea, that knowing her to be richly endowed with all gifts of divine grace, he felt support from him to be unnecessary, and that he had therefore administered no exhortation, addressed no precept to the community of nuns at Paraclete. He heaps her with laudation, but expresses no single word of sympathy for her avowed weakness, or any syllable that shows he comprehends herself. The nearest phrases approaching to what might serve to show that her craving for his tenderness meets response, are those where he says, "it is especially with this hope that I send you the psalter which you requested of me, *Sister very dear to me formerly in worldly life, now a thousand times more dear to me in Christ Jesus.*" And afterwards:—"You know, *very dear, and well beloved*, what affectionate charity your convent, &c."

The lack of sympathetic apprehension of her own nature, while overwhelming her with praise as Abbess, is keenly felt by Heloise; and of this her second letter bears witness. In it, her reticence is less, her passionate implorings more vehement: she sees that her reserve is misunderstood, her generous self-control mistaken for competent self-sustainment. She casts herself now more openly upon his help, invokes it, owns how sorely she requires it, accuses herself of defalcations still more deplorably needing his pastoral assistance, and confesses to want of devoutness, and to failing in spirit, in order that he may be urged into supplying her with encouragement. She feels that she has been hitherto too silent, too secret in her suffering; that he cannot comprehend her

delicacy of restraint in regret, and that she must no longer forbear from letting him see the extent of her yearning for his comfort and kindness. But with what womanly warmth and earnestness, with what womanly effusion of appeal she flings her soul's troubles before him, and supplicates his manly strength to come to the rescue of her acknowledged weakness. How tragic is that half-wild allusion to her having preferred his will before that of Heaven itself: those bitter self-reproaches; those vehement disclaimers of fortitude and merit in endurance; those almost fierce rejections of his praises: she will not allow herself to deserve them, for she feels but too acutely how far rather she would prefer receiving consolation from him than applause:—"God knows,—God knows, that all my life I have more feared offending you than even Himself; and that it is you, far more than Him, that I have sought to please. It was your command, and not the voice of Heaven, which bowed me beneath the conventual yoke. What then is my fate of misery and despair, if so many sufferings are lost for me here below, when I am not to receive any recompense for them yonder above? My dissimulation hitherto has deceived you, as it has done others: you have attributed to a religious impulse that which was but feint and hypocrisy; this is why you recommend yourself to my prayers; but you demand of me what I ask from you."

"Have less confidence in me, I conjure you, lest you cease to aid me by your prayers. No, I am not cured: do not then deprive of the relief of healing. No, I am not enriched with grace; no longer defer then coming to help my need. No, I am not strong; take care that I faint not ere you can sustain me in my fall. Many have found their destruction in flattery, and it has bereft them of the support of which they stood in want. * * * * A truce therefore, I entreat you, to your commendations; do not incur the shameful reproach which attaches to the framers of flat-

teries and lies. If you believe that in me there is still some poor remainder of virtue, dread lest it should exhale in the breath of vanity. A skilful physician descries the hidden malady, although no symptoms betray its existence. And God makes little account of all those outside shows which the reprobate can assume in common with the elect. Often the really just neglect those exterior observances which strike every eye, while no one conforms to them with more scrupulous care than the hypocrites."

And then she concludes with that profound humility taught by conscious weakness combined with strength,—the united softness and potency of love in such a nature as hers.

"I am too happy in your praises, and my heart yields itself too delightedly to them, not to render them dangerous for me. I am but too well disposed to steep myself in their sweet poison, since my sole study is to pleasure you in every thing. Awaken your fears, I beseech you, and lay aside your confidence, so that your solicitude may be ever ready to aid me. It is now that the danger is greater than ever. Do not exhort me to virtue, and excite me to the combat, by saying:—'Virtue reaches its height in weakness;' and, 'the crown will only be given to him who combats to the end.' I seek not the crown of victory; sufficient for me to avoid danger. It is wiser to remove from peril, than to engage in warfare. Let but God assign me a place in the smallest corner of heaven, I shall be satisfied."

That axiom of Heloise,—"I seek not the crown of victory; sufficient for me to avoid danger,"—is a golden one for women. She had but too good reason to know and feel its essential truth.

Abelard's reply to this second letter is still more severe in tone: he rebukes her for murmuring, and constrains her to resume her former quietude. He preaches resignation; he enforces acquiescence; he assumes the character of pastoral director in reproof, and

reverts to their bygone mutual relations in a light of shared transgression that is more consonant with his character than with hers. She is all generosity in blame-taking, as in every thing else; while he is,—but fortunately, it is the province of the present discussion to analyse the character of *Heloise*, and not that of Abelard.

Her next, and third letter, is as characteristic of herself as her former ones, in its way:—it begins by the simple, but impressive sentence: "It shall not be said that you can once accuse me of disobedience: my words shall be moderate, if not my grief, and your prohibition shall serve me as a curb." She utters no farther allusion to her own inner being after the few words:—"Would to God my sick heart were as disposed as my pen to obey you."—After these,—set, as it were, a seal upon the past,—she sedulously applies herself to proving her submission to his will, by entering thoroughly into her appointed course of strict and mere duty. She addresses him no longer as Abelard, the lost husband; but as Abelard, abbot of Saint Gildas. She enters thoroughly into the rules for conventual discipline, her projects for regulating her community of Paraclete, consulting with him (as their pastoral superior) upon the due observances to be established for the practice of her nuns and herself, and subjecting to his consideration the different points in question. She supports her views with a multitude of citations from the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church; she dilates with learned and saintly zeal upon the various arguments she brings forward; and shows that she not only conforms to his wish by making the exercise of her mind serve as a check to the ebullition of her heart, but that she diligently endeavours to make holiness her sole aim henceforth. Religion became to her the climax of her affection. Love which had ruled her heart, now engrossed her soul, and fitly consummated it to immortal perfection of trust and reliance.

With the exception of one other short epistle, addressed—on the same subject, and in the same tone—to Abelard, in his capacity as spiritual guide and director, we have no farther letters from Heloise, save one which she wrote to Peter the Venerable in answer to his, sending her the remains of Abelard to Paraclete. She writes briefly, staidly, simply; but there are two little sentences that speak all the more eloquently for their forced composure. In the one, she entreats of his goodness that he will send her the form of absolution, signed and sealed with his own hand, that she may have it affixed to the tomb of "The Master," as she denominates Abelard. In the other, she piously recommends their son, Astrolabus, to the protection and care of her venerable friend; and seems thus to take leave evermore of life and this world.

Perhaps never did a few letters—fortunately preserved to posterity—contain more clear self-characterization unconsciously evidenced, than these letters of Heloise. They depict her subtly but surely.

Her life, as her letters, denote her in marked unequivocal lines of legible trace. Her native excellence speaks for itself in her singleness of love. Ardent, yet constant; susceptible, yet fixed. In her girlhood, self-forgetting; in her womanhood, tender and self-sacrificing; in her widowhood, grave, faithful, self-redeeming. In youth, in the very flower of beauty and promise, voluntarily quitting the world because the man she loved could no longer live there; in age, devoting herself to the task of rendering herself worthy of him,—as she believed him to be.

Heloise is the very beau-ideal of generous and unselfish love.

LAURA.

In the world's thought, Laura sits enshrined as a Poet's Idol. Hers was the happiness of swaying a poet's thoughts to highest beauty of expression; of influencing his feelings to loftiest sentiment. She elevated his intellectual faculty; and ennobled his desires—one of the choicest felicities that can befal a woman. She had the rare privilege of exciting a passion warm as it was regardful, constant as it was strong, exalted as it was profound. She had the honour of inspiring an affection in one of the most admirable of men, and of enjoying the renown which his genius and his attachment conferred upon her, without a shadow of suspicion falling upon her own fair repute; while she possessed the power of tempering the ardour that glowed in her lover's veins with a feeling of honouring esteem which held them both to virtue, and obtained for them virtue's rewards—self-respect and the homage of mankind.

Laura embodies our idea of a perfect lady. She was essentially a lady in character, being gentle, refined, discreet, modest, and virtuous; a lady in manner—benignant, courteous, and blandly dignified; a lady in habit—accustomed to move in distinguished society with ease and grace; and a lady by alliance, as well as by

inheritance. She was born a lady; being of gentle, though not of noble birth. Her father was Audibert de Noves, the possessor of a landed estate at the town of this name, which lies about two leagues from Avignon, on the left bank of the river Durance; and he filled a civic post of some importance at Avignon, where he possessed a house, still in existence at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it bore the name of "Madame Laure," in traditional commemoration of the celebrated beauty's having once dwelt there. The house stood near the entrance of the suburb of the Cordeliers, which has since been enclosed within the walls of Avignon; and it was either here, or at her father's country-seat at Noves, that Laura first drew breath, in the year 1308. She was left, together with one brother and one sister, under the guardianship of her mother, by the will of Audibert; who, dying in 1320, bequeathed to his eldest daughter, Laura, as her dowry, nearly two thousand pounds—a considerable sum at that period. Beautiful, well born, and rich, Laura was wedded to Hugo de Sade; whose progenitors, for several generations, had held some of the most honourable municipal offices in Avignon. The marriage contract was signed at Noves, on the 16th January, 1325; Laura being then seventeen years old, and her husband rather more than twenty. The detail of a few of the attires which formed part of her bridal equipment, gives a curious idea of the costume worn at that period by ladies of her rank and country. "Two complete suits, one of green, and the other of scarlet, trimmed with fur;" a coronal of silver, worth twenty golden florins;" and, "a bed"—probably furnished with silken, or tapestried hangings, and carved in wood; which last item conveys the impression of that fashion of southern newly-married wives bringing articles of household value, as well as of wearing apparel, for their wedding outfit, which still prevails in many parts of the continent. The two suits, furred and rich-

coloured, with the silver adornment for her hair, betoken the kind of social grade in which she was to take her place; and accordingly, we find her appearing at the state assemblies, and court entertainments given in the palace at Avignon, which had lately been adopted by the popes as the seat of their residence. The rank of Laura's husband, together with her own beauty and distinguished graces, rendered her presence at the papal court indispensable; and she formed one of the chiefest, and most virtuous ornaments of a spot where the perpetual influx of strangers had introduced much corruption of morals and manners. Among the distinguished Italians, whom the advent of the Romish court had brought to Avignon, was the young poet, Petrarch; whose family having been driven from Tuscany by the civil contentions of the Guelphs and the Ghibelines, now came to seek an asylum in the county Venaissin. Laura was at this time nineteen years of age; Petrarch twenty-three. At an early hour, in a morning of spring—at 6 o'clock on the 6th of April, 1327, (Monday, not Friday, as some have stated) in Passion Week—Petrarch was attending divine service in the church of St. Clair, when he first beheld the face of her who became his life's cynosure. The poetical brain, the heart of youthful manhood, the Italian temperament, the imagination of fire, and the intellect, refined as it was vigorous, all combined in conceiving a sentiment, which was Love in its most beautiful form—impassioned, devoted, constant. It took birth in one instant, and lasted until death. It survived all; it survived coldness, disappointment—even the grave. It endured through rejection, it was proof against absence, it lost none of its fervour from being put into words, and abated nothing of its strength from being versed with profusion of sonnets. The force residing in monotony, which characterizes Petrarch's passion for Laura, as traceable in his poems, is eloquently described by Leigh Hunt, where he says on this subject:—"One

love, and one poet, sufficed to give the whole civilized world a sense of delicacy in desire, of the abundant riches to be found in one single idea, of the going out of a man's self to dwell in the soul and happiness of another, which has served to refine the passion for all modern times; and perhaps will do so, as long as love renews the world."

That Petrarch's was no Platonic affection, may be gathered from his own confession, in his "Dialogues with St. Augustine," where he owns that he loves both the soul and body of Laura; depicting the violence of his passionate emotions when near to her or when far from her; his fruitless attempts to win her: his vain efforts to conquer a love which he found to be hopeless: and while averring that he had never been able to obtain the slightest favour from her, offers honouring homage to her purity and virtue. And there is touching witness borne to the strength, as well as warmth of his passion, where he thus writes in 1343—sixteen years after he had first seen Laura:—"My love is vehement, excessive, but exclusive and virtuous. No, this very disquietude, these suspicions, this watchfulness, this delirium, this weariness of every thing, are not the signs of a virtuous love." This self-introspection, and candour of self-judgment, together with the testimony it affords of the poet's constancy, and inner heart,—for the passage is quoted from his "De secreto conflictu,"—is unspeakably beautiful. There is a soul of melancholy mingled with its charm in Petrarch's writing, springing from unsatisfied passion with intensity of satisfaction in the beloved object, that poetry alone can express. Shelley discerningly observes:—"Petrarch's verses are as spells, which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love." There are none like poets themselves for penetrating to the core of a poet's excellence; and it is invaluable to have the comments of two such poets as Leigh Hunt and Shelley upon a third, like Petrarch.

Laura's behaviour to her renowned poet-lover seems to have been consummate in womanly virtue. Married to a man she esteemed, and respecting herself, she could not but preserve his honour and her own inviolate; married to a man whom there is every reason to believe she loved, she could feel no passion for any other. But that she entertained a very peculiar regard for Petrarch, is equally true. It was doubtless a regard made up of tender concern and generous sentiment, such as every woman of feeling extends towards any man who loves her above all other women; she cannot help regarding him with a sympathy beyond that which other men excite in her. And in addition to this, Laura's regard for Petrarch must have been compounded of the proudest emotions: pride in his genius, pride that he should admire her, pride that he could be induced to prefer her self-respect to his own gratification; and pride that his love, instead of injuring her reputation, reflected glory on her name, and made it famed throughout the world. Her conduct is described as perfect in discretion and feminine tact. She treated him with gentle firmness; and by her skill in combining consideration for him with consideration towards herself, succeeded in preserving her own dignity, while she repressed, without lessening his ardour. Handsome, accomplished, impetuous, her Italian poet-lover must have required all the serene self-possession of a Laura, to restrain his advances without chilling his affection; and to quench his hopes without reducing him to desperation. Courteous, even kind, whenever his manner betrayed nothing that could alarm her prudence; she failed not to behave with reserve each time he ventured upon a declaration of his feelings. She could not avoid meeting him constantly, frequenting the same society as they did; but her demeanour was so nicely guarded, so judiciously modified, that each occasion served but to raise his admiration for her char-

acter. At parties of pleasure, at court, at the houses of mutual friends, at church, or in walking, they perpetually encountered each other; but she so happily blended a modest reticence with a sweet and frank friendliness, that his love for her moral qualities kept pace with his love of her countless personal attractions.

Laura's behaviour to Petrarch has been called coquetry; but, —besides that his own testimony absolves her from the charge,— a woman who secures the lasting reverence of a man's heart in proportion with its encreasing passionate attachment to her, can never be a coquette. So hollow and vain an art as coquetry, may succeed in enslaving a man's senses; but it never engages his honouring preference. Laura possessed matchless address; but it was the address of a pure-minded woman, who respected herself, loved her husband, and regarded her lover with a feeling that intuitively dictated the utmost delicacy of discrimination in dealing with his passion for herself. With the conviction of its hopelessness, she taught him the blessing that existed in its beautiful singleness, in its all-sufficing exclusiveness, in its truth and earnestness,—in itself, in short, irrespective of return or of fruition; the simple fact of loving so perfect a being as she, in his eyes was, constituted a bliss with which no ordinary love could compare. Happy the woman who possesses the secret of thus inspiring consociated esteem and love; of softening the pangs which unrequited passion inflicts, by the balmy consolation that lies in enhanced approval of her excellence. The secret of Laura's undying influence over Petrarch, lay in a subtle sympathetic affinity between them;—she tacitly suffered him to perceive that she sympathized with his love for her, while denying herself to be his love; and he instinctively felt this sympathy to exist, although declaring that he never knew whether she loved him or not.

By frequent travelling, by visiting various parts of Flanders,

France, and Italy, by the cultivation of letters, by the creations of his muse, by alternate retirement in solitude at Vaucluse, and social intercourse at Avignon, Petrarch sought vainly, during a period of twenty-one years, either to forget or to extinguish his passion for Laura. Meanwhile she, with her husband, continued to reside at Avignon, where they gradually saw themselves surrounded by numerous children, and possessed of their townpeople's estimation; the quarter where they lived being called by the family name of Sade. It lies towards the lower end of the town, on the banks of the Rhone; and embraces that portion which has since been built over with the streets occupying the space between two of the gates, and near to the church of La Madeleine. Commanding the spot, stands the rock on which the papal palace was erected; and it is said that from this point, Petrarch used to watch Laura, as she walked in her garden amid the leaves of those trees which were his favourite,—recalling, as they did, her name, as well as her image. He planted the laurel tree in abundance at Vaucluse, where he purchased a small property, and made it his abode; so great a liking did he take to this secluded valley. Leigh Hunt—that prince of poetical translators—has given an English version of one of the many passages in which Petrarch alludes to these associated ideas of Laura, the laurel, and the evergreen wreath which is to crown their joint names hereafter. The passage in question describes Laura as the poet might have seen her in her garden at Avignon; or in some of the public gardens of the place, where they met amid a concourse of greeting friends, and where her gentle aspect beamed upon his sight, singled out from a host of countenances, as *the one*, to him, of the whole human race:

"Giovane donna sotto un verde lauro
Vidi più bianca e più fredda che neve
Non percossa dal sol molti e molt 'anni:

E'l suo parlar, e'l bel viso, e le chiome,
Mi piacquer si, ch'l l'ho a gli occhi
Ed avrò sempre, ov'io sia in poggio o'n riva."

"A youthful lady under a green laurel
I saw, more fair and colder than white snows
Unshone upon for many and many a year:
And her sweet looks, and hair, and way of speaking,
So pleas'd me, that I have her now before me,
And shall have, ever, whether on hill or lea."

In 1339, the painter, Simon of Sienna, arriving at Avignon to execute a commission for embellishing the pontifical palace there, made a portrait of Laura, and presented it to the poet, with whom he was on terms of intimacy, and who returned the invaluable gift in kind, by composing two sonnets for the artist. These interchanges, by which men of genius possess the power of adequately requiting such inestimable donations, is among their highest privileges. It remains matter of doubt, whether Laura sat for the portrait; whether it was a duplicate copy of one which the artist painted, as an order, for the Sade family; or whether it was a transcript of the impression which the personal beauty of the lady made upon Simon Martini's imagination, so that he was enabled to limn her likeness from memory; but it is ascertained that he introduced Laura as the principal figure in several of his subsequent pictures.

On Petrarch's return to Avignon in 1342, after having been awarded the laurel wreath of poetry at Rome, and crowned therewith in the capitol, Laura was less studiously reserved towards him, finding how docile to reproof his passion for her was, being touched by its unabated constancy, and not insensible to the circumstance of his recent honours, in which her own were necessarily involved, since his verses had given European celebrity to her name and beauty. When Charles of Luxembourg (afterwards the Em-

peror Charles IV.) came to Avignon in 1346, one of his first enquiries was for Laura—Petrarch's Laura. At one of the festive entertainments given in honour of his visit,—at a ball where the chief beauties of the town and province were assembled—she was presented to him; and, stepping forward, he reverentially kissed her upon the eyes and forehead. The company—with the taste and enthusiasm of a Provençal court—applauded; and Petrarch recorded the event in a sonnet, where he manifests his triumph in this public act of homage to the charms of his mistress, while betraying his jealous sensitiveness at the delight enjoyed by other lips than his own.

In the course of years, domestic anxieties, the cares of a large family, and the hand of time, wrought a change in the beauty of Laura; her complexion lost its freshness, her figure its shapeliness, and the graces of the youthful lady were merged in the mien of the matronly woman. Some involuntary surprise betrayed itself together with the admiration expressed by those who beheld the poet's Laura for the first time. "What!" exclaimed one, whose rank, in its impunity from censure, gave license to his speech, "is this the fair prodigy who has made so much noise in the world, and who turned Petrarch's head?" But to those who uttered their wonder that he should still admire her, the lover replied, "Had I loved her person only, I had changed long since." The eyes of a true lover, with the ever-youthful sight of a poet, in addition, behold something in the object beloved, which outlasts external change; the change of mortality itself cannot alter genuine love; for it substitutes in place of the vanished mortal clay, an immortal ideal, and cherishes that evermore as its object of eternal affection.

Petrarch is said to have had an interview with Laura towards the close of the year 1347, when he beheld her for the last time upon earth. He found her amid a circle of lady-friends; she was

looking serious, and pensive; her dress quiet, without jewelled ornament, or embellishment. Her eyes wore an expression of undefined apprehension, as of some impending evil, or approaching attack of indisposition, hardly yet fully felt. Her lover, moved almost to tears, withdrew abruptly, seeking to hide his emotion. Laura followed him with a look so full of gracious regard and gentle appeal, that it remained graven on his memory. The kind of presage that seemed thus to have struck upon the hearts of both was terribly fulfilled. A raging pestilence, which took its origin in China, after wasting Asia and the coasts of Africa, made its way into Sicily, and quickly spread over the continent of Europe, where its devastations prevailed during three years. Its march was like that of the modern cholera—from East to West—but more awful and overwhelming. History furnishes no example, since the deluge, so universal, and so calamitous. A fire, believed either to have sprung from the earth, or fallen from the sky, consumed in Tartary three hundred miles of territory, and devoured in its flames men, animals, trees, and even stones. Earthquakes, inundations, and tempests occurred in various places; while clouds of venomous insects infested the air. In certain countries of Asia the majority of the inhabitants died of the infection; or, being seized with frenzy, bit and devoured each other. Boccaccio, in the opening of his Decameron, gives a forcible picture of the state of his native Florence, during this disastrous period. In summing up the picture of desolation, the Italian novelist exclaims, with a kind of grim levity at the conclusion, that heightens the horror and sense of the jarring impressions that then confused and oppressed men's minds: —"How many fair palaces! How many goodly houses! How many noble habitations, filled before with families of lords and ladies, were then to be seen empty, without any there dwelling, except some servant! How many kindreds, worthy of memory! How

many great inheritances; and what plenty of riches were left, without any true successors! How many good men! How many worthy women! How many valiant and comely young men, whom none but Galen, Hippocrates, and Esculapius (if they were living) could have reputed any way unhealthful, were seen to dine at morning with their parents, friends, and familiar confederates, and went to sup in another world with their predecessors!"

This dread plague broke out in Avignon, in January, 1348; carrying off the enormous number of one hundred and twenty thousand souls in the space of seven months. So large an amount of deaths might seem incredible in a town since containing scarcely a fifth of the inhabitants; but it should be remembered that Avignon was then the capital of Christendom, and that its being the seat of papal residence, drew a multitude of strangers thither; besides that many of the country people from the neighbouring parts took refuge there, endeavouring to fly from infection. All those who were attacked, died of the disease in the course of three days. Among its victims, was Petrarch's Laura. She felt the first approaches of the malady on the 3d of April; the continual fever, and other fatal symptoms supervening, left no hope for one whose health was already delicate; and she composedly prepared for death—making her will that same day, and receiving the last sacraments of religion. Her friends and relations, braving infection, hung weeping round her bed, ministering to her, and watching her last moments. They were peaceful, as such a woman's should be. Laura lay there, calm and quiet, reaping the fruits of an innocent, virtuous life, and of a tranquil temperament. Petrarch's words describe her:—

"Aguisa d'un soave e chiaro lume
Cui nutrimento a poco a poco manca.
Pallida no, ma più che neve bianca,
Che senza vento in un bel col fiocchi,
Parea posar come persona stanca."

["Like unto a clear and beauteous light,
Whose nourishment little by little faileth;
Not pallid, but more white than falling snow,
In flakes, unstirr'd by wind, on some fair hill:
She seem'd to rest, like wearied traveller."]

She breathed her last pure breath in the air of early day, expiring gently at six o'clock in the morning, on the 6th of April, the fortieth spring of her years on earth. That evening, in consonance with her own wishes, her remains were carried to the church of the Cordeliers, and interred within the chapel of the Cross, in the tomb of the Sade family.

The poet's soul felt the shadow of the approaching blow, in the shape of cruel presages, and ill-omened dreams; but it fell upon him in its terrible truth, when the news of Laura's death reached him at Parma. The traces of what must have been his anguish at the time, are visible in that affecting memorandum which his own hand left, written in Latin, and fastened to the wooden binding of his manuscript copy of Virgil.* The very solemnity and simplicity of the record, witness the strength of his feelings. "Laura, illustrious from her own virtues, and celebrated through my verses, was first beheld by these eyes in the period of my youthful prime, in the year 1327, on the 6th of April, at the first hour of the morning,† in the church of St. Clair, at Avignon; and in the same town, in the same month of April, the same date, the 6th, and at the same hour, in the year 1348, the light was withdrawn from the world, while I, alas! was at Verona, ignorant of my loss. The afflicting news reached me in a letter from my friend Luigi; it found me at Parma, on the morning of the same year, the 19th of May. That

* This precious volume is still preserved in the Ambrosian Library, at Milan. It is enriched with vignettes by the same artist, Simon Martini, who painted Laura's portrait; and has marginal notes in the same handwriting as Petrarch's memorandum, above quoted.

† According to the Italian method of counting time; meaning 6 o'clock, A. M.:—and which was the same with the old Hebrew mode of dividing time: the "third hour of the day," being Nine A. M.

body, so chaste, so beautiful, was deposited in the church of the Cordeliers, on the evening of the day she died. Her spirit, I doubt not, is returned to that heaven whence it came. To preserve the mournful memory of this bereavement, I take a certain bitter pleasure in writing this record; and write it the rather in this book, which is often before my eyes, in order that there may be nothing henceforth to please me in this life, since my chief link with it being broken, I may be reminded, by the frequent sight of these words, and by the just estimation of a transitory existence, that it is time to leave this Babylon; which, with the help of Divine Grace, will be nowise difficult to me, from a manly and courageous contemplation of the fruitless cares, vain hopes, and unforeseen events which have agitated me during my earthly sojourn."

His own dismissal was indeed in harmony with his own gracious life. He was found one morning, seated in his library; his head leaning on a book that he had been reading; his body at rest, and his spirit flown to its Great Giver.

Petrarch's poetical temperament enabled him to sustain the pang of Laura's death. She was lost to him on earth; but he possessed her still in heaven. She was his own, there, even more truly, than she had been while here in the flesh:—he worshipped her adoringly as ever—and with yet greater feeling of exclusive appropriation. Her image became sublimated to his thought; and he could contemplate it with a spiritualized love, undistracted by impassioned wishes.

The verses in which he hymns her after she was dead, are perhaps finer than those he penned while she was living. They are chastened into higher aspiration, and more exalted ideality. He made the noblest use of her loss—the use befitting a true love losing its sole object—by converting it into the means of raising him to immortal hope. He believed himself to be in constant

communion with her spirit; he fancied her visibly beside him, consoling his regrets, soothing his sorrow, illumining the dark and restless hours of night by her presence, appearing to his sight, and pointing heavenward in token that there they should meet to part no more. It is this elevated tone of feeling in her lover's writing, which bears witness to the purifying influence that Laura exercised over his mind. Had she been any but the noble creature she was, the poet's affection could never have been so constant, and so refined in character. Had she been the mere adroit captivator sometimes imagined, she could never have exercised this posthumous ascendency over Petrarch's thoughts. But he himself in his sonnets, takes occasion to bless the virtuous firmness which turned his course to a happier shore, and preserved him from perishing. And not merely immediately upon his loss, was he thus impressed by her guardian excellence; but after his heart had been a widower twenty years, he describes Laura appearing to him, as in a haze of beatified glory, assuring him how welcome death is to those who are prepared: and telling him, that when she herself died, she felt no sadness, save pity for him. He represents himself as beseeching her to say whether she ever loved him; and her answering evasively, that although gratified by his love, she deemed it right to repress his warmth by the coldness of her manner; but that when she saw him dejected and unhappy, she looked consolingly, and gave him words of kindness. "It was by this alternate rigour and gentleness," he makes her say, "that I have led thee—sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy; often, it is true, weary, yet still I have led thee whither there is no more peril, and I have thus saved us both. There has been a sympathy between us, little differing, except in this: that thine was proclaimed to the whole world, and mine was kept concealed. But grief is not the less for being endured in silence; nor is it the more for being loud in lament."

We are bound to accept the moral portrait of Laura as drawn by the hand of Petrarch; for though there may be the proverbial extravagance of the lover, and the assumed hyperbole of the poet in this praise, yet there is much more real truth in the exaggerations of both lover and poet than conventional judges generally believe. There is a truth in the high colouring of both love and poetry as far superior to the mere verbal truth of strict and bare description, as there is in a portrait, painted by Titian, beyond that of a photographed likeness. The mellowing, and idealizing in high art, gives a truer embodiment of the life, than the hard rectilinear precision of the mechanically stamped similitude.

The personal portrait of Laura may also be gathered from her poet-lover's verses, as well as her moral picture; and with the same conviction of its essential fidelity in the midst of heightening fancy. The eye of affection and of poesy sees the best aspect of the beloved one, it is true; but the eyes of the world should be glad to behold that best, and should avail themselves of that keener sight lent them by the lover and the poet, when depicting the object of their admiration. And it is curious, too, that from one little negative circumstance, we may believe that Petrarch adhered to the very letter as well as the spirit of Laura's perfections; since he is silent with respect to one feature of her face, while eloquently descanting upon all the others. He avoids describing her nose: therefore it is probable that it was not remarkable for beauty; and his inferred candour on this point—for it amounts to a tacit evidence—may be taken as a proof, that he did not flatter her in any of the others. An Italian dissertator alledges that Laura had a nose, the style of which he designates by the word "*scavezzo;*" and adds, that this is considered a beauty in France, implying thereby that she had what the French call a "*nez retroussé.*" In English, there is no term more softened for this kind of nose—

very bewitching, nevertheless, to some tastes—than a "snub-nose," or a "turn-up-nose." We all know what havoc Marmontel's Roxalane, with her "petit nez retroussée," committed in the heart of the Sultan of the Indies. The word "scavezzo" [indented] certainly conveys the idea of that kind of nose, which is in the portrait considered to be the most authentic of Laura.

The written picture of her, which may be collectively obtained from the descriptions of Laura dispersed through Petrarch's poems, shows her to have had eyes both brilliant and tender; and although he does not precisely state their colour, yet his allusions to sapphire in his figurative expressions, indicates them to be blue. Her exquisitively-cut mouth was composed of pearls set amid roses. Her countenance was more round than oval; her eyebrows were dark, while her hair was pale gold; her skin was of dazzling fairness; her complexion clear and transparent, with a delicate yet brilliant colour; her shape symmetrical, and graceful: her shoulders, neck, hands, and feet beautifully moulded and proportioned; her carriage noble and majestic; her looks full of gentleness, sweet cheerfulness, and sincerity; and a celestial air pervaded her whole appearance. The expression of her countenance was its charm; and the tone of her voice was enchantingly soft and melodious.

Some biographers have asserted that Laura possessed the poetical faculty,—that she wrote verses; and that she took her place among those ladies of her native land who composed "The Court of Love." It is possible that these tribunals, where beauty presided, where gallantry reigned, and where various nice questions of Love and Wit were discussed, counted a lady of the house of Sade among its members; but it is very unlikely that if Laura de Sade had been this lady, Petrarch would have failed to notify such a circumstance. Had she figured in "The Court of Love," and certainly had she possessed the gift of poetry, her poet-lover would

not have omitted to enumerate these distinctions when proclaiming her merits. Since her name alone supplied him with such multiplied ingenuity of allusion, it is not likely that he would have failed to seize upon so fruitful, and so congenial a theme of gratulation. We see how beautifully he could assemble her many perfections in one lovely poem, when we read that which Leigh Hunt has so finely translated for us; and which he calls, "Petrarch's contemplations of death in the bower of Laura."

"Clear, fresh, and dulcet streams,
Which the fair shape who seems
To me sole woman, haunted at noon-tide;
Fair bough, so gently fit,
(I sigh to think of it)
Which lent a pillar to her lovely side;
And turf and flowers bright-eyed,
O'er which her folded gown
Flow'd like an angel's down;
And you, O holy air and hush'd,
Where first my heart at her sweet glances gush'd;
Give ear, give ear with one consenting,
To my last words, my last, and my lamenting,

If 'tis my fate below,
And heaven will have it so,
That love must close these dying eyes in tears,
May my poor dust be laid
In middle of your shade,
While my soul naked mounts to its own spheres,
The thought would calm my fears,
When taking out of breath
The doubtful step of death;
For never could my spirit find
A stiller port after the stormy wind;
Nor in more calm, abstracted bourne,
Slip from my travail'd flesh, and from my bones outworn.

Perhaps, some future hour,
To her accustom'd bower
Might come the untam'd, and yet the gentle she;

And where she saw me first,
Might turn with eyes athirst
And kinder joy to look again for me;
Then, Oh the charity!
Seeing amidst the stones
The earth that held my bones,
A sigh for very love at last
Might ask of heaven to pardon me the past:
And heaven itself could not say nay,
As with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away.

How well I call to mind,
When from those boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat meek-eyed,
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
Some to her hair paid dower,
And seemed to dress the curls
Queen-like, with gold and pearls:
Some, snowing, on her drapery stopp'd,
Some on the earth, some on the water dropped;
While others fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying, "Here reigns Love."

How often then I said,
Inward, and fill'd with dread,
"Doubtless this creature came from Paradise!"
For at her look the while,
Her voice, and her sweet smile,
And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes;
So that with long-drawn sighs,
I said, as far from men,
"How came I here, and when?"
I had forgotten; and alas!
Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was
And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere."

Tradition intimates that the man who possessed the wedded faith and affection of Laura, scarcely deserved his treasure; for

there are hints that his temper was arbitrary and capricious; and it is related, that he was so little affected by the loss of her who had brought him eleven children, that he married again within eight months of her death. Traditional accounts relative to such points as these are difficult of trust,—or rather, of decisive construction. That the husband's temper could be wayward, seems hardly likely, when he gave such staid sanction,—as he did by tacit consent and approval—to the world-known admiration of the poet for his wife. A man subject to caprice or tyranny would, at some time or other, have made protest against this open assertion of a kind of property in her whom he would have considered exclusively his—his goods, his chattels,—for this is the light in which men of arbitrary temper regard their wives. With respect to the other circumstance,—Hugo de Sade's marrying again, so soon after losing Laura,—that can only be judged according to the character of the man. A husband who is of a social and sympathetic disposition, cannot endure the void left in his existence by such a bereavement; and, the more eagerly if he have been extremely happy with his first wife, will he endeavour to supply her place by his side, for the remainder of his days. These are completely matters of individual feeling and temperament. The chance is, however, that the man who made an unfortunate selection in his first wife, would deliberate in risking a second: it is reasonable, therefore, to conclude, that Hugo de Sade was both a worthy, and a happy husband; and his early re-marriage was a tacit proof of this, as well as a testimony to the mother of his eleven children.

Two centuries after Laura had been laid in her grave, some of the chief church dignitaries at Avignon, occupied in antiquarian research, obtained permission to have her tomb opened. The interest in Laura had been made universal and enduring by her Laureate: his might had rescued her from what Sir Thomas

Browne calls, "the iniquity of oblivion," which, he says, "scattereth her poppy and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity." Petrarch's poetry had imbued Laura's name with an undying charm that sufficed to render her very dust precious. On raising a large stone bearing no inscription, but having two escutcheons somewhat effaced by time, surmounted by a rose, a few small bones were found, near to which lay a leaden casket fastened with wire. This box contained a parchment folded and sealed with green wax, with a medal in bronze, representing a female figure veiling her bosom, encircled by the initial inscription, M. L. M. J., which has been conjecturally interpreted to stand for *Madonna Laura morta jace.* On the parchment was an Italian sonnet, signed with the name of Petrarch; but which, judging from its mediocrity, is supposed not to have been his, but possibly written by one of his friends, perhaps the very Luigi, who, according to the memorandum in Petrarch's Virgil, conveyed the news of Laura's death to her lover. This exhumed discovery excited much attention. Francis the First, passing through Avignon in the autumn of 1533, desired to see the tomb of Laura. He read the sonnet; and when he replaced it in the casket, he added an epitaph of his own composition. This tribute of homage from a prince of such tasteful and chivalrous accomplishment as Francis the First, was a graceful offering paid by royalty at the shrine of beauty; and the quaint old French verses themselves are so good, as to do credit to both kingly author, and queenly lady.

"En petit lieu compris, vous pouvez voir
Ce qui comprend beaucoup par renommée;
Plume, labeur, la langue et le savoir,
Furent vaincu par l'amant de l'aimée
O gentille ame! étant tant estimée,
Qui te pourra louer qu' en se taisant?
Car la parole est toujours reprimée
Quand le sujet surmonte le disant."

["In small space compris'd you here may behold,
That which compriseth a world of renown;
Pen, labour, and knowledge, a language of gold,
The beloved one's lover attained as a crown.
O gentle-sweet soul! so honour'd already;
Who, but by silence, may thy praises record?
For words must be always found lame and unready,
When the subject of praise exceedeth all word."]

Francis gave orders that a mausoleum should be erected for Laura's remains, and he contributed the sum of a thousand crowns towards defraying its cost. The architect was selected for the work, and the motto was chosen, which was to be graven thereon:—"Victrix casta fides:" but this monument was never executed, although the poet Clement Marot, and others, ascribed to the monarch the credit of its intention. Since the discovery of Laura's tomb, travellers have not failed to visit it, and examine the casket, medal, sonnet, and epitaph; but all these memorials have now disappeared.

Towards the beginning of the eighteenth century, a certain friar Bassi, sub-sacristan in the church of the Cordeliers, sold the casket and medal to some English visitors. This ridiculous passion for relics is a terribly Anglican failing, and leads to the most degradingly fatuous conduct. The way in which scraps of ropes, used for hanging notorious felons; slips of bushes, and vials of water from ponds, where murderers have hidden their victims' bodies; and similar revolting articles, have been eagerly bought up by relic-fanciers, bitten with this mania, is almost incredible to saner people. These rabid "snappers-up of ill-considered trifles" will hack with their pen-knives some carved wooden effigy, till it shall be a heap of splinters, or chip out bits from some antique marble, till it be a shapeless mass:—(the Sphinx will soon be dispersed, with the present fashion of the English to winter at Cairo)

—they will hoard up morsels of dismembered and disconnected trash, with stolid veneration ; yet laugh at Chaucer's Pardoner with his "glass full of pigges' bones;"—and at Boccaccio's friar, with his " feather of the Phœnix that came out of the Ark," while sneering at " Popish trinkets, and idol-worship." These gentry have so obtuse a perception of the real interest seated in relics, and so craving a maw to possess the mere things themselves, that a handsome sum was offered to the town of Stratford-upon-Avon for the house in which Shakespeare was born, with a view to transporting it abroad ! As if that house could have any charm carted away from the sweet English village in which the poet of poets first drew breath. Pulled down, carried off, put up again elsewhere, it becomes no better than a mere handful of bricks and mortar.

The leaden casket and bronze medal picked out of Laura's grave, and transferred to some cabinet of curiosities, ticketed and labelled, to be stared at by idle casual eyes, unassociated, unhallowed by time and place, are but poor baubles. After all, the best relics are those which are imperishably enshrined within the record of the poet's verse, or the deeds of good, great, and glorious people. A single line of poetry immortalizing a beautiful speech, or a heroic act, forms a truer memorial, than an actual portion of a person. A rib-bone of Milton, which we have often reverentially gazed at—and which may have lain close against the poet's heart, when it throbbed with the conception of that great epic, recording the first human-moulded rib, and its long train of consequent wonders—never stirred our soul with one tithe of the emotion that the poet's own lines have excited. How dull and adust, how devoid of interest and meaning that small slender ossicle looked, compared with the vital words:—

"Who stooping, opened my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd,
And in her looks; which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight."

Petrarch's verse is the sumptuous reliquary where Laura's beauty is eternally embalmed in unfading lustre. In her life-time his poems showed the world what a woman adorned it:—after her death—and to all time, they will show the world what a creature it once contained. And not only in the poet's productions, but in himself, he enhanced Laura's honour; for he was so noble a man, morally as well as intellectually, that it reflects credit on the woman who was beloved by such a being. His friendship for Boccaccio, witnesses his high and generous sentiment. The following extract from one of Petrarch's letters to his brother-writer, is a beautiful instance of manly feeling:—"Reflect whether you cannot, as I have long wished, pass the remainder of your days with me. As to your debt to me, I do not know of it, nor understands this foolish scruple of conscience. You owe me nothing, except love; nor that, since each day you pay me; except, indeed, that receiving continually from me, you still continue to owe. You complain of poverty; I will not bring forward the usual consolation, nor alledge the examples of illustrious men, for you know them already. I applaud you for having preferred poverty combined with independence, to the riches and slavery that were offered you; but I do not praise you for refusing the solicitations

of a friend. I am not able to enrich you; if I were, I should use neither words nor pen, but speak to you in deeds. But what is sufficient for one, is enough for two: one house may surely suffice for those who have but one heart. Your disinclination to come injures me; and it is more injurious if you doubt my sincerity."

How finely does Petrarch's warmth of affection for Boccaccio, and his admiration for that writer's talent, refute the ignorant prejudices of the common herd, respecting the jealousies of men of letters towards each other. Boccaccio made a beautiful manuscript copy of Dante with his own hand, gorgeously illuminated, as a present for Petrarch; while Petrarch was so great an admirer of Boccaccio's story of Griselda, that he translated it into Latin for those who could not read it in Italian; and took pleasure in frequently reading it himself; and committed it to memory, that he might relate it to his friends. He evidently repeated it to Chaucer; who, in his introduction to his own version of the Tale (the Clerk's), says that he "learned it at Padua of a worthy clerk," and proceeds to explain that:—

> "Fraunceis Petrarke, the laureat poete,
> Hight this ilke clerke, whose Rethorieke sweet
> Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie."

Not only have we this link of association between Petrarch and the father of English poetry; but there is one slender thread that brings him together with Shakespeare in our fancy. Among the places he visited, when wandering over Europe, in the endeavour to free himself from the thraldom in which his senses were held when perpetually within sight and reach of Laura's beauty, while still unable to subdue the more passionate impulses of his affection, Petrarch rambled to the *Forest of Ardennes;* and here we may imagine him vying with Orlando and Silvius in knowledge of "the wounds invisible that love's keen arrows make;" or, bantered

by Rosalind for being "a fool, and turned into the extremity of love."

There existed in Florence, in the possession of the Peruzzi family, a small bas-relief in white marble, representing Petrarch and Laura, behind which there were inscribed these words: "Simon de Senis me fecit, sub anno dom: MCCCXLIII." This piece of sculpture is about eight lines thick, six inches high, and each of the two portraits measures about four inches and a half. It was brought to Paris by Signor Vincenzo Peruzzi in 1820, and he published a pamphlet, avouching its genuineness.

He stated how the marble bas relief came into the possession of his ancestors; and mentioned that the figure of Laura was more worn than the other, from its having been so frequently kissed by enthusiastic beholders.

Petrarch's Laura is dear to the memory of men, for her gentle benignity towards a lover who could not refrain from adoring her excelling beauty, although it could not be lawfully his; and she will ever be held dear among women, for maintaining her sex's purity and dignity, while using her power over her lover in influencing him to good and high aims. As the Italian Poet's ideal of womanly excellence, Laura must ever be

"Dear for her reputation through the world."

VALENTINE DE MILAN.

Valentina Visconti, otherwise known as Valentine de Milan, was a beautiful instance of womanly purity and virtue, preserved amid the most vicious environments. Her girlhood in Italy, and her wifehood in France, were passed among scenes of grossness and ferocity incredible to us, who live in more civilized times. Her father, Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, was the first of his house who held the title of Duke of Milan. In his earlier years, he bore some resemblance to Shakespeare's "Duke of Milan,"—Prospero—for Giovanni Galeazzo was addicted to study, and

> "Neglected worldly ends, all dedicate
> To closeness, and the bettering of his mind."

But subsequently he gave himself up to far other pursuits; exchanging the tranquil delights of learning for the turmoils and cruelties of ambition.

From infancy, he showed so much perspicacity, so much disposition for silence, and so precocious a judgment, that it was long believed so clever a child would not live to reach manhood. The taste for knowledge, which he at such tender age had evinced, did not forsake him to the end of life; but it remained a taste, and was no longer an avocation, when the thirst for rule seized him. In youth, the pleasures of study rendered him insensible to the

attractions of gaming and dissipation; he took no interest in the humours of court-jesters, or the graver discussions of state business, giving all the time he might have spent thus, to his favourite scholarly pursuits. When compelled to attend to affairs, he conducted them rather as a student, than as a man of business. He introduced a method and care unknown till then, into the composition of manifestos and state papers. He caused all orders and instructions—even to the most minute—to be written out; and the archives of Milan contain more ample materials relative to his administration, than to that of any other prince. He had taste to appreciate the high merit of Petrarch; whom he induced to come to Milan, and sojourn at his court. It was at Petrarch's suggestion that Galeazzo Visconti founded the university of Pavia. He deserves notable memory, too, for having been the beginner of Milan Cathedral. Soon after his being crowned Duke of Milan, he commenced building that superb edifice; which rears its white splendour, a monument of its founder's taste in Art, whatever may have been his perplexingly opposed moral qualities.

During his father's lifetime, he had served in the army; but on his father's death, in 1378, he succeeded to the sovereignty, and renounced arms thenceforth, in his own person. For although after that period, he was almost always at war, he went no longer into battle; leaving to his commanders the care of its conduct. In 1360, his father had united him in marriage with Isabelle de Valois, daughter to Jean, king of France; who, from distress for money, had granted his daughter's hand in recompense for a timely subsidy. From this union sprang Valentina; and one son, who died. After his first wife's death, Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti married, in 1380, his cousin Caterina, daughter of Barnabo Visconti. From the time of succeeding to his father's dignity, Giovanni Galeazzo showed that his ambition would be restrained by neither

ties of kindred, nor feelings of honour, and by no compacts or treaties, however solemnly made. He seemed to have wholly changed character; and, from a quiet recluse scholar, to have become a violent, rapacious, and crafty despot. The town of Asti having revolted against his brother-in-law, Secondotto, Marquis of Montferrat, and the latter having recourse to him for succour, Giovanni Galeazzo caused the town to be delivered to him as mediator, retaining the sovereignty for himself. When, too, the ambitious spirit of Barnabo Visconti, his uncle, gave him fears that he might become the victim of his relation's plots, he determined to circumvent possibly intended treason by stratagem and murder. He began by deceiving Barnabo with a false assumption of extreme devotion. He passed his time in churches; a rosary in his hands, kneeling in prayer before the images of the saints, or surrounded by friars and priests. At the same time, he made no secret of a pusillanimity, which formed part of his character; he redoubled his guards, fortified his castles, and expressed fears that seemed inconsistent with any intention of raising an insurrection himself. From this aspect of passiveness he suddenly issued, by causing his uncle (and father-in-law) to be arrested at the gates of Milan, May, 1385; and by afterwards poisoning him.

It was in a paternal household thus curiously compounded of contrasted elements,—where studious pursuits and ambitious projects, elegant learning and blackest perfidy, held mingled place,—that Valentina Visconti acquired her first lessons in life's strange history. She seems to have learned from them a power of looking on at scenes of vice and violence without stain to her own virtue and gentleness; and of abiding by conscious goodness as a refuge against calumny and injustice.

The different wars in which her father was incessantly engaged came to a kind of temporary lull at one time; and his various as-

sailants caused him to consent, 1392, to a general peace. It was at this period, that an alliance was concluded between his daughter Valentina, and Louis, Duke of Orleans, brother to Charles VI., king of France. Dowered with the province of Asti, and with large sums of money as her marriage-portion, she espoused this royal bridegroom. The Prince, her husband, was one of the most profligate and factious among the profligate and factious nobles who divided France into party feuds during that unhappy reign. The malady of the king afforded pretext to the leaders of all the contending factions, for seeking appointment to govern the kingdom as regent for a monarch not capable of sway. His luxurious queen, Isabelle, or Isabeau, of Bavaria, his licentious brother, Louis of Orleans, the turbulent Duke of Burgundy, and the aspiring Count of Armagnac, were each restless in striving to make the king's mental disease a step to their own adoption of regal power.

Valentina's husband, Louis, was leagued with the queen, both in policy and profligacy. No considerations of honour towards his king and brother, acted as a restraint upon the dissolute duke; and no sentiments of wifely duty or womanly self-respect deterred the abandoned Isabeau from lending herself wholly to the ambitious views and vicious inclinations of the Duke of Orleans. Her story, itself, is a romance of sinfulness. Young and beautiful, her hand was sought by Charles VI., who had heard extravagant reports of her charms. Under pretence of performing a pilgrimage, she came to Amiens, where the young king was; succeeded in fascinating him at the first interview, and obtained that ascendancy over his weak intellect, which enabled her ever after to sway him at her will. Her tastes were luxurious and expensive; and Brantôme, remarks that she was the first queen who introduced into France that frantic passion for extravagant luxury, in which women of the court have since so unlimitedly indulged. The entry

of the young king and queen into Paris, is described by historians with curious detail; and the festivities in celebration of the royal nuptials, were of unprecedented magnificence. They merged into a kind of nocturnal Saturnalia, where all the court were masked; and the "Chronique de St. Denis" records that, under favour of the mask, there was not a person who did not abandon him or herself to the extreme of licence and scandal. It was believed that, on this very occasion, began the criminal familiarity which existed between the queen and the Duke of Orleans,—so early did Isabeau take advantage of her husband's weak intellect, to plunge into the most wanton disorder and disloyalty. She suffered her talents and beauty to act as means of enhancing the disturbances which racked France with faction, and menaced it with foreign invasion; while indulging unscrupulously in whatever evil passions her unbounded love of magnificence and enjoyment led to.

Such was the woman whom Valentina found in scarce-concealed commerce with her libertine husband, Louis, Duke of Orleans. But instead of torturing herself with jealousy, or debasing herself by reproaches, she took refuge from the pain inflicted by the guilty pair, in attempts to soothe the afflicted condition of him who was fellow-sufferer with herself. Charles VI. took a strong fancy to the gentle and beautiful Valentina, between whom and his wife, Isabeau, there was a certain personal resemblance,—probably, a family likeness; for Isabeau was descended from a scion of the same house as Valentina, being daughter of Taddea Visconti, and Stephen II., Duke of Bavaria.

The innocent and affectionate attentions of this lovely young creature could win the unfortunate king from his moods of distraction when other means failed. In her presence he felt calm and pleased; no one knew so well how to tranquillize him when agitated; no voice like hers could lure him from his fits of sullenness

or depression; and unweariedly she devoted herself to the gentle task of relieving by all means in her power his sufferings of body and mind. The brilliant festivities which the occasion of Valentina's marriage called forth, and which the profuse tastes of the queen made frequent in that gay court, were soon left unattended by Valentina, that she might sit with the brain-sick king, and try to alleviate his condition. Her loving goodness touched his best feelings, awakened him to a sense of joy and comfort, and engaged his tenderest gratitude. He called her his "dear sister," his "sweet sister;" and begged her not to deprive him of her soft whispered talk, which was to him welcomest music. He besought her not to leave him; not to deprive him of her society, which shed peace on his troubled spirit. He conjured her to return, each time that malignant slander drove her to retreat from court, in the hope of silencing its evil tongue. For, all the clearness of this young creature's conduct, all the transparent innocence of her nature, could not screen her from injurious reports. Though "chaste as ice, pure as snow, she could not 'scape calumny." Party hatred converted even this fair gentle girl into a medium for their envenomed shafts. Through her they attacked the objects of their animosity. The party of the Duke of Burgundy, opposed with deadly rancour to that of the queen and the Duke of Orleans, made the young Duchess of Orleans a source of arousing popular prejudice. The belief in Italian skill in sorcery, and Italian knowledge of the uses and properties of various kinds of poisonous drugs, was very general. Even in Shakespeare's time, we find Imogen's fears for her husband taking the shape of invective against "that drug-damned Italy." The Burgundian party did not hesitate to avail themselves of this popular belief, by exciting in the public mind an idea that Valentina's influence with the wit-diseased monarch was owing to her being an adept in the arts of sorcery, and in the preparation of

philters conducive to subject the will and the affections of their victim to the sinister purposes of the swayer. The Duke of Burgundy did not fail to hint, that Valentina in her native Italy had had ample opportunity for becoming well versed in the black arts of magic, and that she was proficient as a poisoner. Her father's well-known studious habits as a young man, and his subsequent crime towards his uncle, lent colour to these accusations. The Duke of Orleans' haughty rival insinuated that the young duchess took advantage of her ascendancy over the king's doubly feeble mind—weak from insanity, and weakened by fond-potions—to promote her husband's interest, and secure his position of authority in the kingdom. The guardianship of the king's person had been awarded to the queen; while the government of state affairs had been committed to the Duke of Burgundy. But the Duke of Orleans had appealed against this disposal; and his power over Isabeau's heart enabling him to make her exert herself in his favour, their united cabals had forced Burgundy to yield for a time. It was in his efforts to regain state authority, that the Duke of Burgundy did not scruple an attempt to fasten upon Valentina the suspicion of unduly influencing the king's favour on behalf of his brother, her husband. It is probable that the young wife did exercise such magic as she was mistress of, to augment the partiality which Charles VI. had always entertained for his unworthy brother; for neither Louis's wrongs towards herself, nor his betrayal of both conjugal and paternal honour, could destroy her affection for him. But the magic she used, was the sorcery of loving-kindness, the witcheries of affectionate intimacy; the enchantments of gentle nursing, soothing, cheering, and consoling. Her sole charm was the charm of sweet temper; her strongest spell that of goodness and untiring patience. Not only in her behaviour towards the hapless king was her moral beauty evinced; but in her for-

bearance and her constancy of attachment towards her scarce-deserving husband. She seems to have possessed the noble virtue of making all generous allowance for the faults of him she loved. In an era marked by unblushing licence of all sorts, she could find large toleration for his open infidelities, his boundless luxury, his rampant ambition. Although her innocent attractions could not suffice to fix his unstable fancy, nor her modest graces succeed in securing her his esteem, she continued to regard him with affection, and to interest herself on his behalf. But not only did he neglect her for other women, wound her feelings by indifference, hurt her tenderness by repulse, and injure her both in love and honour by his unfaithfulness; he lent weight to the calumnies of her accusers—although her accusers merely endeavoured to ruin her on his account—by giving a kind of countenance to their assertions. Not content with alleging that she contrived to acquire unlawful influence over the king's crazed judgment, they barbarously took occasion, from the sudden death of a beloved child of her own, to frame a tale of treachery and subtle crime against her. The partizans of the Duke of Burgundy spread a report that her son had died in consequence of having swallowed by mistake a poisoned draught, prepared by his mother for the Dauphin; and the Duke of Orleans, heedless of the air of credence that such a step would give to the story, and insensible to the grief of that gentle heart, which seemed doomed to be pierced through its tenderest affections, sent her away to Neufchâtel. This might have been at a suggestion from Isabeau; or it might have arisen merely from his own levity, and a dissolute desire to free himself from the presence of a wife, in order to give still freer course to his profligate inclinations. Not content with the favours of the licentious queen, Isabeau, he sought those of all the meretricious beauties who abounded in that polluted court; and it was by one of his innu-

merable mistresses that he had that illegitimate son, renowned in history as the handsome Dunois ("le beau Dunois"), and surnamed, according to the out-spoken fashion of the times, "the bastard of Orleans."

It was this very sin in Louis Duke of Orleans—his insatiate and all-unsparing gallantries—which led to his own untimely fate.

> "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us."

Louis dared to cast his unhallowed eyes upon the young Duchess of Burgundy's beauty; and had the audacity to attempt making it his prey. His villainy not succeeding in prevailing against her virtue, his vanity consoled itself with assailing her reputation, by boasting of favours never obtained. But this madly reprobate act cost him his life. The outraged husband was not one to let pass such an occasion for signalizing his wrath. It was the crowning circumstance in a long series of mutual rivalries and antagonisms subsisting between the House of Burgundy and the House of Orleans. The present Duke of Burgundy was that John Lack Fear ("Jean sans peur") who had won this proud surname by his dauntless bravery when a youth, in an action against Bajazet, Sultan of the Turks. He made a desperate effort to regain the power he had temporarily ceded; marched suddenly and unexpectedly upon Paris; forced the queen's party to take refuge at Melun; obtained possession of the king's person, and of the capital, which was devoted to his interest; and entered into negotiations for establishing peace. Apparent reconciliation was effected; but not long after, the Duke of Orleans was assassinated in the streets of Paris. For a few days only, Burgundy dissembled; then he confessed to being author of the deed, "instigated," he said, "by the Devil." Thus summarily did he account for the foul act; and though he appeared to feel a brief compunction for it, by retiring to his

dominions after the murder, he speedily rallied, boldly justified his act, charged the late Duke of Orleans with disloyalty, returned to Paris with an armed force, and procured, under the hand and seal of the king, a pardon "for what had lately happened to the Duke of Orleans."

Such boldly acted, and lightly treated atrocities, glaringly bespeak the lawless disorder of those times; and place vividly before us the distracted state of the realm and of social condition.

Valentina was at Chateau-Thierry towards the close of the year 1407, when she learned the fatal tidings of her husband's violent death. His blood seemed to cry aloud for avenging retribution; and she resolved to obtain this last and sole-remaining satisfaction to his manes. First placing her children in safety—for a faction capable of committing so flagrant a deed, taught her to take the precaution of securing them from possible harm—she sent her family to Blois, while she herself repaired to Paris. Arrived there, she traversed the city accompanied by a long train of women in mourning garments, and went to throw herself at the king's feet, beseeching vengeance on the murderers of her husband. The feeble-minded prince promised her redress, with all the marks of sincere emotion; but he was a mere puppet in the hands of others, and he had no power to gain for her what he engaged to procure. The widowed duchess, with her sable-clad attendants, moving along the streets of the capital to demand royal vengeance for her murdered lord, offers one of those solemn pictures to the imagination of modern times, which then appealed straight to the hearts of living eye-witnesses. In unlettered ages, when printing was unknown, and when even reading and writing were confined to veriest few, the people had to be addressed in visible tokens. Public opinion was enlisted for or against, by symbols; public sympathy or public indignation, public favour or public animosity were best and most

effectually stirred by presented images. Verbal report was used as a means of prepossessing, or prejudicing; while visual signs were made the medium of active impression. Contemporary history shows that Valentina's public procession through the streets of Paris, was by no means a singular case of popular appeal. The life of Isabeau herself affords many such examples; and while testifying the mode of making those graphic appeals, it accumulates instances of the wild misrule then prevailing. On one occasion, when successfully grasping at dominant power, this brazen queen caused the acts of her administration to be proclaimed, created a parliament, had a great seal engraved, representing herself with extended arms, towards imploring France; and entitling herself in all papers issued in her name, "Isabeau, by the grace of God, Queen of France, holding, as regent for his majesty, the King, the government and administration." At another time, we find her siding with his enemies against her own son, the Dauphin; degrading France by treaties with the English, and sacrificing her country's interest to her own, by effecting an alliance in marriage between her daughter Katharine and Henry V. of England. Isabeau is a veritable "wicked queen" of the stamp depicted in fiction. She is like a royal heroine of melodrama. She had lover after lover; and stifled her pangs for the loss of each, by taking a new one. She converted love into a means of satisfying hate; and turned hatred into love, when it served the purposes of her passion for power. The three lovers whom she especially favoured, each met with a tragical end. The Duke of Orleans was assassinated; Louis de Boisbourdon was tortured, and flung into the river; and the Duke of Burgundy was stabbed to the heart. The fate of the second was marked by that savage detail, characteristic of the period in question. The queen's amour with the young officer, Louis de Boisbourdon, becoming suspected, he was seized, loaded

with chains, subjected to the torture, forced to confess his crime, thrown into the Seine at night, fastened in a leathern sack bearing this inscription:—"Make way for the king's justice." In the period of her disgrace, when she was deprived of her jewels and treasure, and sent captive to Tours, Isabeau changed her ancient enmity towards Jean sans peur, Duke of Burgundy, and murderer of her first lover, the Duke of Orleans, into favour; sent for him, won him to her cause, and effected her liberation from prison by his means. A traitor gave admittance to the Burgundian party into Paris, where they made horrible massacre of the Armagnacs—the faction for the time in power; and Queen Isabeau, with her new lover, came to the capital, escorted by twelve hundred men-at-arms. Her entry wore the air of a triumph. She appeared, mounted on a car. Flowers were strewn in her way as she passed—along those very streets fresh stained with the blood shed in the massacre just perpetrated on her behalf. In those very streets, too, where her early lover, Louis of Orleans, had been murdered; and where his young widow and her mourning train had passed to seek redress.

Valentina's interview with the king was followed by no effective result. The queen, whose own selfish sorrow at the loss of the Duke of Orleans, inspired her with no commiseration for the rightful grief of his unappy wife, sent her away from court. Valentina retired to Blois and remained with her children; but she did not cease from demanding justice. She even made a second attempt to engage the sympathies of the citizens of Paris, by once more appearing before them, robed in black, and attended by her weeping women, on her way to obtain a hearing for her dolorous plea of the unavenged wrong done to her husband; but the impunity which then attended crime, and the ascendancy of the culprit, rendered all her efforts unavailing. The poignant regret

she felt at the death of a husband, whose many wrongs towards her could not destroy her love for him, reduced her to a despair which brought her to the grave. Her husband's natural son, Dunois, was then at Blois, with her own children, and the generous tenderness she extended towards this gallant youth—treating him with no less affection than the rest—was rewarded by a devoted attachment on his part. Finding herself on her death-bed, Valentina caused them to assemble around her, and charged them ever to behave so as to sustain the honour and glory of their house; and, above all, to persevere in seeking to obtain vengeance for their father's barbarous murder. Dunois responded to her appeal with more of spirit and determination than the others; and she exclaimed:—"He was stolen from me; I ought to have been his mother."

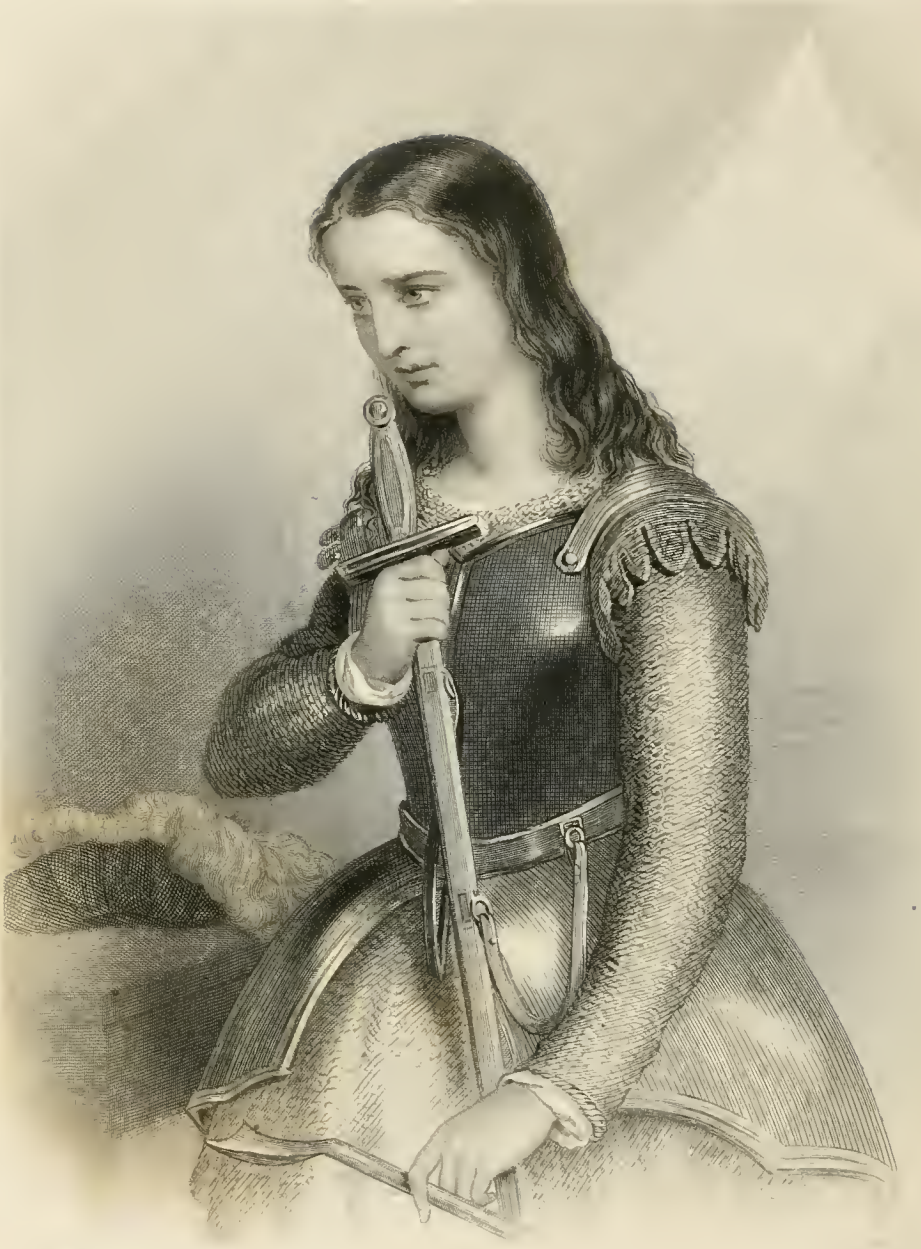
This noble-hearted lady, and womanly princess, died in 1408, at the age of thirty-eight only; after having yielded to the world an example of the brightest virtue preserved unsullied in the midst of a profligate court, the softest kindness amidst times the most violent and turbulent, the mildest forbearance under injurious treatment from her husband, and the tenderest constancy towards his memory. Her gentle patience with the king, and her feminine soothings of his malady, are in consonance with the delicate generosity of her behaviour towards "le beau Dunois." A heart like hers could find candour of allowance for human failing; and could pluck out the core of sweetness that exists within outwardly bitter husks.

The motto she adopted in her widowhood, evinces the utter despondence which took possession of that gentle heart when it had lost the husband who owned its pure and fond affection. The simplicity of the wording, enhances the soft plaint and touching resignation of the device:—

"Rien ne m'est plus;
Plus ne m'est rien."

["For me naught henceforth;
Henceforth naught to me."]

The hereditary rights of Valentina, in the Milanese territory, subsequently became an occasion for those wars in Italy which two of the kings of France—both grandsons of hers, Louis XII. and Francis I.—carried on there. She, who was one of the most forbearing of women, to be made the source of an aggressive warfare upon her native country, seems like a posthumous injury to her gentle nature. The character of Valentina stands forth in the centre of the discord and licence that surrounded her, like a pure statue of white marble in a city given up to the bloodshed and rapine of conquering soldiery.



JOAN D'ARC.

From the surging populace of great cities, even from the glittering swarm of palaces, may come military heroes and managers of the state—mere fighters and schemers; but from the thoughtful quiet and sweet shadow of humble rural life come oftenest the leaders and deliverers of the people, and they for whom wait the divine agonies and sombre triumphs of martyrdom. It is by communing with God, more than with man, that they learn the true grandeur of humanity and the sacredness of human liberty. It is by "nourishing a youth sublime" on the simple elements of nature, on the healthful calm of solitude, far away from the belittling follies and degrading passions of the world, that the soul elect to redeem, or to expiate, takes to itself the fiery forces of the hero and the grand sustaining faith of the martyr.

The unobstructed sight of earth and sky—the dewy sweetness and reverent stillness of early dawn—the unveiled glories of midday, the pomp of sunset, the majesty of night—sun and storm, the freedom of winds, the strength of torrents, all minister to them continually, in silent, subtle ways. Even the flowers of the field, brightening lonely places with their prodigal yet beneficent lives, and the trees of the forest, blessing earth with liberal shade,

and stretching up yearningly toward heaven, are to them types and teachers of the divinest truths and destinies of humanity. From all they behold of the natural world—its marvels, its splendours and delights, they learn reverence for man, for whom God has cared and planned so much, and reverence for God from all things, great or small—from the insect, that flashes into life and dances in the sunshine of a single day, to the planet that for ages of ages has wheeled through the limitless heavens;—from the firefly, throbbing out his little radiance in the dusky dell, to the great central fountain of light at which the worlds drink.

The chosen of the Lord, the last champion of Freedom, the heroic soul sent to meet some fearful crisis in the life of nations, to lead, save, or avenge the people, is almost always simple, pious and primitive. So was David, the shepherd-king of Israel—so was Wallace, so was Tell, so to a degree was Washington, so was Charlotte Corday, and so, beyond all, was that beautiful marvel of womanhood and sainthood, Joan D'Arc.

Nothing could have been lovelier, more sylvan and tranquil than the opening scene in the life-tragedy of *La Pucelle*. The quaint little village of Domrémy, on the Meuse, and near the vast forest of the Vosges—the humble cottage of Jaques D'Arc, a labourer—close on to the dense and fairy-haunted Bois Chénus.

On the May morning when Joan was born—when the fear and the anguish were past, and the peasant-mother slept a sleep that was like a heavenly trance, deep, and sweet, and calm as God's peace,—slept, yet felt through all, the new life astir in her bosom, the blind wandering of the soft little hands, the faint breathing of the small, rosy mouth,—could she have beheld that form when scarce grown to womanhood, encased in armour—that hand bearing the banner, the sword or the battle-axe—those lips uttering prophecies, rallying-cries, or words of vain defence—could the

red lights of battle and of martyrdom have flamed through her dreams, how would she have shrieked herself out of sleep to clasp her baby closer, with tears and wild caresses!

But we may not suppose that any such prophetic intimation of the strange destiny that awaited her child came then or after, to trouble the peace of Isabella D'Arc. The little Joan grew up good and beautiful, modest, devout and obedient, and her parents had doubtless great joy in her, hoping for her length of days, according to the promise—peace, the good-will of their little world, and humble happiness.

But this was not to be. Joan came in a troublous time. France, after a mighty struggle, was sinking at last, in the long, unequal contest;—the Lion of England was at her throat—the fierce factions of Burgundians and Armagnacs were rending her limbs apart. War, famine, pestilence, treason, rapine—all imaginable crimes and miseries desolated the land. More groans than prayers ascended to Heaven,—for the gift of life, went up curses—for the smiling sunshine, the blaze of burning hamlets—for the sweet silent fall of dews, the rank exhalations of blood, crying to God for vengeance. On the throne, a crazed king—Henry of England declared the heir—Charles the Dauphin disinherited and proscribed—the English arms overrunning and laying waste the realm,—was ever kingdom, or people in a more piteous and humiliating strait?

All classes felt it,—into the most remote and sheltered village came the shame and the sadness, over the sunniest spot hung the shadow of the nation's misfortune. It came even to Domrémy, and lay very dark and heavy on the soul of the little maid Joan. It filled her heart, her young girl's heart, which should have been as full of gladness and music as a nest of singing-birds, with a strange yearning, a vague, but noble melancholy, a divine sorrow,—

or as she more simply and grandly expressed it, "*the pity for the realm of France.*" This "pity" left her neither by night nor day. It was with her in her humble domestic labours, in the fields, with her flocks, under the fairies' tree,—in the old oak wood, beside the fountain, before the shrine, in the chapel, and in her little chamber.

Most melodious to her ear and dear to her heart were the chimes of the chapel-bells; but she loved better than these—better than the chanting of holy monks, to hear from her mother's lips the legends of saints and prophetesses—of Miriam, of Judith, of the blessed saints, Catherine and Margaret. As she listened, the flashing of her deep, dark eyes betrayed the fire of zeal and enthusiasm kindled in her soul. She longed to inspire others, or herself to accomplish some noble work for her country and her God. Then she would blush with holy shame at her presumption, and say—"What am I, that I should so aspire!—I who am scarce worthy to pray."

She sought to fuse all her aspirations, her longings, her fears and sorrows and pity into prayer. In all things possible she conformed her outer life to the example of her "brothers and sisters in Paradise"—her inner life was hidden with God. She haunted the chapel and lonely wayside shrines, dropping tears with her beads. Her breath became as incense—her pure body a temple of the Spirit. She vowed herself to holiness, chastity, and the service of the Lord.

Joan was yet a child when she had her first vision. It did not come to her at night, or in the solemn shades of the forest, or dim aisles of the church; but at noontide, on a summer day, in her father's garden. She saw a bright light, and heard a heavenly voice saying, "Joan, be a good girl,"—little more than that; yet the timid child was frightened, and told no one at the time.

Again and again came the visions, and, at last, she grew famil

iar with her celestial visitors, Michael, and Margaret, and Catherine, and could recognize them by their voices. When they told her to go to the help of her king and country, she answered simply, "I am only a poor peasant girl: I know not how to ride or lead men-at-arms;" but when they clearly directed her to go to the Governor of Vaucouleurs for aid, and promised to befriend and guide her, she bowed her meek head in devout, though tearful resignation to a destiny full of strange terrors, peril and mystery.

She left her home, her parents, her brothers, the sisters of her heart, the poor and suffering she had ministered to, the flocks and herds she had tended, the fairies' tree, the fountain, the chapel—all the dear places sanctified by her earthly loves and celestial visions, and went before the Governor of Vaucouleurs, a great and terrible personage to her, and calmly proclaimed her sublime mission and her divine appointment.

How the Sire de Baudricourt scoffed at first, and refused all aid—how the people, the common people, always wiser than their rulers, believed; and how the hard scepticism of the rude soldier gave way at last, before the simple eloquence, the holy zeal, the solemn persistency of the inspired peasant girl—how she clad herself in a man's dress for her man's work, and buckled a sword about her slender waist—how she tore herself from the arms of parents and weeping friends—how with a little train of followers, she traversed provinces bristling with the lances of the foe, deserts, forests, and marshes overflowed by wintry floods, we know; but all she suffered, all she sacrificed, the fiery strife that rent her tender heart—the grief, the dread of that parting, the secret shrinking of her modest and sensitive nature from the unmaidenly work to which she was called, we can never know.

Very brightly and serenely she passed through the ordeals that awaited her at Chinon and at Poitiers, undazzled by the pomps and

splendours of the court, undismayed by the awful council of learned doctors, unbewildered by their cunning questioning, their theological subtleties and sophistries, unshaken by the doubts and fears of priestly infidelity. Through the blackening cloud of base suspicion, through the blinding mists of metaphysics, her pure and ardent soul burned its way. Like the child-Christ, she confounded the doctors.

Again the common people believed in her, and said, "The maid is of God." Women hailed her with joy as a new revelation of the Virgin—children clasped their little hands in adoration and lisped out *Aves*.

What a glorious and marvellous vision she must have seemed to people, nobles, priests, and soldiers, when she took her place at the head of the army, in her shining armour, on her black war-horse, her battle-axe and the sword of St. Catherine at her side, her sacred banner in her hand, her beautiful head uncovered, her lovely childlike face radiant with a saintly enthusiasm!

And how grand was her entrance into Orleans—the brave and suffering city which had long been praying for her coming—the fair promise of ages—"the Pucelle of the Marches of Lorraine, who was to save the realm."

She enters at night, in the midst of a storm of thunder and lightning; yet the people crowd around her, eager to pay her almost divine honours. Down each dark street they pour, like torrents—the thunder rolls above them, the rain beats upon them unheeded;—every flash of lightning reveals to the Maid thousands of pale, famished faces, thousands of awe-struck, wistful eyes, hungry for the help she brings. Her war-horse labours through the human flood, and bears her, not to the rest and refreshment her tired body so needs, but to church, to offer up prayers and thanksgiving. As she prostrates herself on the cold marble floor,

before the image of her Lord, and the silver clang of her armour rings through the church, the people who have followed her, kneel also, scarcely knowing if they are worshipping the creature or the Creator. And from that girlish figure, kneeling with clasped hands, lifting a face pale with mortal weariness, yet strong with divine power—the long dark locks dripping over it, and mingling rain with tears, a wave of devotion seems to flow down the long dim aisle, and out into the open street, prostrating the crowd, who weep, give thanks, and adore.

From the church, Joan repaired to the house of the duke's treasurer, who entertained her during her stay in Orleans. His wife and family received her kindly, and one of the daughters, Charlotte, shared her chamber and bed. One can but wonder if Charlotte slept much that night, side by side with that wonderful, beautiful, anomalous creature—that tender virgin, who had just laid off the armour of the warrior—that prophet, seer, and leader of armies, who, even in her dreams, talked with her saints, and murmured of battles and sieges.

But though the soul of the Maid was exalted to almost superhuman heights of heroism and devotion, her woman's heart was most womanly. When, as she rode around the walls, and summoned the besiegers to surrender, or commanded them to depart, they returned railing, curses and vile epithets, she shrank and bent under their stinging insults, as from a pelting hail-storm, and covering her burning face with her hands, wept bitterly. Then came to her a voice which none else could hear, a voice of love and strengthening, and she looked up comforted, saying:—"I have had news of my Lord."

Joan has been compared to David of Israel; yet surely there is little likeness beyond the fact that she sometimes tended her father's flocks. David, a youth "ruddy" and "goodly to look

upon," came singing and harping to the camp of the king, unconscious of the work before him. Joan, a maiden, pale with the passion of her sublime purpose, came praying and fighting—or, at least, leading fighters, for it was affirmed, and we like to believe it true, that her hand and holy sword were never stained with blood of her own shedding. She comprehended, in all its magnitude and peril, the work to which she was called. She had measured her Goliah, and knew that his fall would shake the realm, and might crush her. When David's envious brother said to him —"Why comest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?" it is very likely that David smiled quietly, and went on adjusting the avenging pebble in his sling—but when the English Glasdale cried out to Joan to "go back to her cows," she wept. Both knew that "the battle was the Lord's"—but David flung his fiery young heart into the thick of the fight, into the fury of carnage—Joan's heart was down among the fallen, bleeding with every wound that carried mortal anguish to friend or foe. David devoted his enemies to indiscriminate slaughter, and "pursued after them;" Joan, magnanimous and merciful, wept over the dead, comforted the wounded, and spared the flying.

Throughout the siege of Orleans, how infinitely she transcended the boldest and brightest ideals of the enthusiast and the poet! How grand was she in courage and endurance, how childlike in her simplicity and faith, how divine in her "pity." Nothing long disturbed the lofty calm of her perfect trust, the serenity and poise of a modest self-respect, and a simple dignity surpassing the utmost pride of kings, putting to shame the frigid hauteur of queens. Even insult and treachery from those who should have honoured her most, and implicitly obeyed her, as one who spoke and acted as she believed, and they professed to believe, by divine authority,

all failed to move her to violence. When she heard that a secret council had been held, at which opposite measures from those she advised had been resolved upon, though she saw clearly the unworthy object of her envious confederates, and must have felt a noble scorn of passions so reckless and so mean, she only said quietly, "You have been at your council; I have been at mine."

She had resolved, or rather, as she would have said, "the voices" had told her, that the daring and decisive movement, the attack on the Tournelles, should be made on Saturday, the 7th of May—and who should gainsay her, through whose lips spoke the power and the wisdom that dwelt not in armies, or in councils of men? At dawn, she went forth, fasting, but strong and full of hope and courage, at the head of a few men-at-arms and a crowd of citizens, eager to follow wherever their fighting angel should lead—inspired with one purpose, one faith, one soul.

The stoutest English hearts quailed when they beheld this multitude hurled against their bastilles in one stupendous avalanche of valour and of fury; but they shrank with superstitious dread, crossed themselves, and muttered holy words with white lips, when they beheld Joan, cheering and leading on the assailants, her silver armour flashing back the sun, her snowy banner swimming on the breezy air of morn! What arm of flesh, what mortal valour could withstand this superhuman adversary, this fair young witch, this avenging Nemesis, with the face of an angel–this radiant portent, this beautiful terror!

Yet one steadied his brain with sturdy hate, and fixed his dazed eye long enough to direct an arrow toward that shining form—or it may have been a chance shaft that struck her. Certain it is, that Joan was on this day wounded, for the first time, just as she was about to mount the wall of the redoubt. She had prophesied this; yet when the cruel arrow plunged into her breast, and the

warm blood jetted out over her corselet, she trembled and burst into tears. The human bled, the woman wept, but the devout heroic soul neither fainted nor despaired.

For a little while she consented to be borne from the scene of conflict, that her wound might be dressed. Then, comforted and strengthened by her "holy ones," she rose from the grass, wet with her precious blood, (the spot should have grown the lilies of France ever after,) and staggered back to her place in the van. But she found the assailants giving way. It seemed that her wound had drained their hearts of courage. Dunois sounded a retreat, but Joan only counselled them to "rest awhile, eat and drink." For herself, she prayed. Then she directed that her sacred banner should again be borne against the redoubt, promising victory the moment it should touch the wall. And no sooner were its silken folds seen to surge and ripple against the dark stone, than seized with a fiery impulse of faith and valour, citizens and men-at-arms bounded up the ladders, leaped over the walls, and all was won! Better than balsam for her wound, and strong wine for her weakness, were to Joan, the victorious shouts of her people. Almost with the same breath she thanked God for the deliverance of Orleans, and prayed his mercy on the souls of the English perishing in battle, or drowning in the Loire.

The next day, the ninth from that of Joan's entrance into Orleans, the siege was raised and the enemy retreated. Joan forbade pursuit, saying, "Let them go—it is Sunday."

From this, to the crowning at Rheims, how marvellous, how almost passing belief were the acts, and the triumphs of the maid! —Sweeping on from victory to victory, mysteriously led by an imagination exalted above human reason—by a divine instinct, by a *something* awful and infallible, moving ever before her—her cloud by day, and her fire by night. What mere hero ever united

such high, unselfish aims, such faith, such sanctity, to such a genius for war, surpassing and utterly confounding the cunning and strategy, the venerable precedents, the "wise saws and modern instances" of military art. Her successes vindicated her "wild wisdom," and showed that the haste and boldness of her movements were but prudence and forethought, fused into a passion. At the time when she urged upon Charles the Dauphin the daring policy of marching at once to Rheims, to be crowned before his rival, the boy-king of England—thus securing to himself a most important advantage, a solemn *prestige* which nothing could set aside—she was opposed by his oldest and so-called wisest counsellors, who all advised delay. Even the soldiers, who had been ready to pay her divine honours in the hour of victory, doubted and feared. With them, enthusiasm was but the light crackling flame of fagots, burning itself out with the occasion, and leaving merely ashes for the winds to scatter—in her, it was the intense glow of molten metal, flowing into the heaven-formed moulds of great deeds, and hardening for immortality. In their coarser natures, her mystic illumination became the wild light of superstition—her faith, fanaticism—her courage, ferocity—her righteous anger, the fury of rapine and revenge.

Yet she led them on, wherever her "holy ones" beckoned—led those fierce French captains like bloodhounds in leash, sullen and rebellious, yet yielding a growling obedience—led the soldiers, at first, doubting and grumbling—then, as victory followed victory, again wondering and adoring—led the daily augmenting hosts of the people, a motley multitude, some inspired with her inspiration, her love and "pity for the realm of France," some desperate with wretchedness and wrong—worn wrestlers with pestilence and famine, gaunt and ferocious as starved wolves, and mad with the sharper hunger of long unsatisfied hate.

In the coronation at Rheims, who does not feel that the real crown descended on the bowed head of the Maid? A crown beside which the circle of gold and jewels that flashed about the brows of Charles was but the veriest bauble that ever a child sported with? And when she fell at his feet, and, weeping entreated that she might be allowed to sheath her sword and fold her banner for ever—to return to her home, and the tending of her flocks at Domrémy—to her humble household duties and loves, who does not feel that she was higher and grander than any monarch that ever lived?

How soon after leaving Rheims the Maid's path begins to darken to us, with the vast shadows of doom stretching backward from Rouen! To her it only seemed dark and doubtful after the visions and the voices left her at St. Denys. Repulsed and wounded in the attack on Paris, she saw what the end would be, and nerved her great soul to meet it. With what sublime patience, with what pathetic grandeur her nature endured the darkness and the storm of the evil days, and rose above misfortunes and reverses! When her sword of St. Catherine was broken—when her sacred banner had trailed in the dust—when, wounded in vain, she had been borne by her soldiers away from a lost battle—when her king reproached and courtiers scoffed, blaspheming against her "holy ones"—when her enemies railed, and the heavens were dumb—when men were faithless, and angels forgetful—still, through cloud, as through sunlight, from the valley of humiliation as from the heights of triumph, she looked upward and prayed. When her Lord hid his countenance from her, she clutched at the hem of his garment.

At the siege of Saint Pierre-le-Moustiers, where she gained a victory, though almost deserted by her men, a glorious vision of heavenly aid was vouchsafed to her. One of her followers testified

that seeing the Pucelle apart, he asked what she was doing there alone, and she taking her helmet from her head, replied that she was not alone, but had in her company fifty thousand of her people, and that she would not leave the spot until she had taken the town. "And yet," adds the witness, "for all that she said, she had with her no more than four or five men."

This Daulon was like the servant of the prophet, before his eyes were opened to see the airy army of the saints militant—" the horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

On the night when Joan was taken captive in a sortie from Compiègne—in reality, betrayed into the hands of her enemies, she is said to have prophesied her approaching fate in the church of St. Jaques. After having partaken of the holy sacrament, she stood leaning against a pillar, and looking round on the people and the little children, with tender, wistful sadness; then she said—" My good friends and my dear children, I tell you of a surety, there is a man who has sold me; I am betrayed, and shall soon be given up to death. Pray to God for me, I beseech you; for I shall no longer be able to serve my king, or the noble realm of France."

Does not this scene, do not these words recall a yet more solemn communion—a more august voice of prophecy, of loving and sorrowful farewell?

During the nine dark heavy months of her imprisonment, dragged from fortress to fortress, from prison to prison—now in the lofty towers of Beaulieu, and Beaurevoir, where she was tempted for the help of the poor people of Compiègne to fling herself down, vainly hoping that her angels would bear her up,—now in the low donjon-keep of Crotoy, where she looked out on the restless sea, toward the land of her pitiless foes—betrayed, humiliated, "sold for a price," loaded with chains, insulted, and reviled; spat at and buffeted by Christian England—maligned and abandoned by

Christian France—alone, absolutely alone in this awful strait, her lofty and courageous soul remained unsubdued, undismayed—regretting not the past, despairing not for the future, neither reproaching craven friends, nor railing at unmanly foes.

Yet we cannot but believe that her bitterest secret tears were shed over the coldness of her followers and the cowardly indifference of her sovereign. He who but for the crown she placed upon his head, would have stood unroofed to the heavens—but for the help she brought, would still have been a royal outlaw—hunted perchance among caves and rocky fastnesses, while his child-rival played securely at kingship, under the red shadow of Winchester—he, so immeasurably in her debt, stood aloof from her in the hour of her great need, and sunk his poor soul into depths of infamy unfathomable. To her whose career was the sole glory of his reign, whose blood had consecrated his crowning more than the holy oil of the Priest, he had made this return;—he gave at her humble entreaty, exemption from taxation to Domrémy—he gilded against her wish "the refined gold" of heroic sanctity, and painted "the lily" of chaste womanhood by his miserable letters of nobility. Behold all!

In the history of every Republic there are pages blackened with the proverbial crime of Republics,—and how few portraits of Princes can be painted to the life, without the blush, or the brand of the same low crime. How many a beautiful young champion has made his Sovereign "wroth" by the very glory of his triumphs, has been "eyed" with evil suspicion, and heard the air sing with the javelins of kingly jealousy:—how many a faithful, white-bearded soldier, with loyalty written in wounds upon his breast, has been driven from court and camp, in age, poverty, and misfortune, like a grand old war-horse turned out on the world's wide common to die;—how many a statesman, with his life woven

into the woof of his country's laws, and whose acts are epochs in her history, has been royally frowned out of power and place;—how many a noble voyager has returned with a bowed head and manacled hands from the quest of continents, from pointing out the track of empires and unlocking the mystery of ages. But what single, gigantic ingratitude of prince, from Saul to Ferdinand—what monstrous, concrete ingratitude of Republic ever equalled in wickedness and baseness, the ingratitude of Charles? The horror of it seems stamped into the heart of the world—the shame of it seems yet to blush in the blood of the race.

Joan D'Arc was brought to trial on the 21st of May, 1431, before a tribunal of priests—mostly dark, wily, unscrupulous men, the tools of Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, the tool of Cardinal Winchester. After the full and eloquent account of M. Michelet, it were needless for us, even had we space, to give the details of this strange trial, this monstrous mockery of justice, wherein the bribed and bigoted judges took their seats resolved to give the undefended and unbefriended prisoner not even the benefit of a merciful doubt—to shut their eyes and harden their hearts for conviction and doom. They arrayed against the Maid all the terrors of ecclesiastical law—they frowned upon her with the black wrath of the Church—they prepared theological pitfalls for her feet—they wove about her snares of cunning subtleties, fine as air—they dressed up lies as truths, and truths as lies. But she feared no human law while conscious of perfect obedience to the divine. The terrors of the Church could not awe or alarm, while she was sure of God, nor the power of priests darken the sunshine of his acceptance; her simple faith bridged unconsciously the pitfalls they had dug with demoniac patience—to her child-eyes their marvellous snares of cunning subtleties were but frail, transparent webs, spun by human spiders—black, venomous creatures, but

powerless to hold or harm her. As for the viper-like doubts with which they sought to sting her soul, she flung them off unhurt; the poison would not work in her pure blood.

She neither denied her faith, nor defied her fate. Like a virgin-martyr in the arena, surrounded by curious and mocking foes, while that soft-footed, sleek-coated, priestly hate crept around and around her, nigher and nigher, with a glare of fierce exultation and hot pantings of blood-thirst, she neither crouched nor towered, but stood erect and calm, in the simple majesty of innocence and maidenhood, sublime in resignation.

Again and again, upon her trial, she expressed her unshaken faith in God, her reliance upon his goodness, her submission to his will. In vain they applied the rack of inquisition to her soul—they extorted no murmur of weak fear, no faintest shriek of atheism. In vain they sought to involve her in a labyrinth of doubts, contradictions and metaphysical objections,—she held fast to a clue invisible to them, by which she felt her way back to God.

One of her judges asked—"Joan, do you believe yourself in a state of grace?"—a cruel and momentous question to put to any human soul,—but what mingled meekness and wisdom in her reply:

"If I am not, may God be pleased to receive me into it; if I am, may God be pleased to keep me in it."

At length, after months of examination and intimidation came the horrible public parade of judges, preachers, men-at-arms, executioners, torturers, all to confront and terrify one poor girl, pale and weak with recent illness, long imprisonment, anxiety, sorrow, and barbarous usage. On a towering scaffold in the cemetery of St. Ouen, with *memento mori* written in grave-mounds around her —with grim torturers at her side and the executioner waiting in his cart, beneath her, she was betrayed, tricked into signing a revoca-

tion. A brief, unimportant paper was read to her, which she could sign without treason to her "holy ones" or her own soul. And she signed—not that, but a paper which had been artfully substituted—a long, humiliating, traitorous recantation. Then followed "the sentence of grace!"—the condemnation to life-long imprisonment, penance, and a woman's dress. Then, sent not to one of the prisons of the church, where she would have had "ghostly keepers," but back to her old dungeon, where she found herself surrounded by rude soldiers, with no defence against their vengeful hate and brutal passion; manacled, deprived of her male dress, the last trap of monkish craft was sprung upon her—the vile fiendish plot by which her virgin purity was made to cost her the cruellest pains of martyrdom. Robbed in the night of her woman's robes, she put on her soldier's dress, with no martial thrill in her heavy heart—with no delight in its tinkle and bravery.

How exulted then her implacable foreign foes and her priestly persecutors—how they crowded around the pit into which she had fallen at last, and laughed down upon her in horrible joy. English and French forgot the fierce enmity of ages, in the grim sympathy of superstition, in the fraternity of hate.

Mr. De Quincey, in that remarkable Essay upon Joan of Arc, in which he seems for a time to be beating off with light jesting and querulous cavilling the full realization of the piteous tragedy of Joan's story, that nevertheless possesses him at last, and fills him with glorious frenzy—argues that M. Michelet bears too severely upon the English for their share in the persecution and martyrdom of the Maid; and that the French priests, who acted as the tools of Winchester in trying and condemning her, and the French king and people who made no effort to save her, were more guilty than the English, who had, at least, the excuse of foes, and defeated foes, with lost honour and blood to avenge. It were a difficult,

and, perhaps, presumptuous thing, to portion out and balance such gigantic crime—only God's hand can weigh mountains. The flames of the martyrdom of that single woman, that girl of nineteen, are still the lurid light by which the world reads the character of her people and her king—and, stretching across the channel, they fall as ghastly illuminations on a dark page of English history.

At one time, Joan's enemies had feared that she would escape them—that the death-angel would dash from her lips the "bitter cup" they had mixed for her. It was when she fell ill in Passion-Week, with home-sickness and soul-sickness, rather than any bodily disease. A sweet, kindly breath of the spring air, which searched into her dungeon, and thrilled through the noisome, stagnant air, a few brave and loving sunbeams smiling through her grated window—perchance the faint, delicious murmur of birds, nest-building in the prison towers, awoke wild yearnings in her heart for Domrémy, the old oak wood, the haunted fountain, her home, and all its household loves.

On Easter Sunday, how the joy-peal of Rouen's five hundred bells must have smote upon her heart! As they swung on high, consecrating the air with melodious benedictions, sprinkling earth with a baptism of holy sound, they rung out hope, and love, and life to all save her. Through her prison walls the many-toned chime came robbed of gladness and mercy—stern, reproachful, ominous—a hurried death-knell. For the happy world without, the Lord arose from the dead—for her, no angel came to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre.

With a diabolical mockery of human kindness, she was cured of this illness. She must not be allowed to steal quietly out of prison, like the Apostle, and escape with the angel down the dark valley by night. She must not die like a child, of home-sickness, like a woman, of a broken heart. Her death must be made a spec-

tacle for nations—thousands must feast on her torments, and snuff the smoke of her burning.

There is something infinitely touching in the saint's and hero's relapse into simple humanity and womanhood, on that dark unnatural May morning, when the heavy news was told her that she must die before sunset. She wept bitterly. Like Jephtha's daughter, she mourned that her pure and beauteous body should be thus cruelly sacrificed, exclaiming:—"*Hélas! Me traile-t-on ainsi horriblement et cruellement, qu'il faille que mon corps, net en entier, qui ne fut jamais corrompu, soit aujourd'hui consumé et rendu en cendres!*"

She shrank, and shrieked, and writhed at the thought of the flames, pitying herself for the pain. But the saint triumphs soon; even through the fiery vista before her, she sees a better kingdom than France, a better home than Domrémy—even in this death, she recognizes the "deliverance" promised by "the voices."

She appealed to God, from the injustice and cruelty of earth; she partook of the holy sacrament, with many tears; she uttered her touching and tremendous words to the Bishop of Beauvais, a summons to answer for her death before God. What a childlike naturalness, what a plaintive *naïveté* marked the words she addressed to one of the preachers standing by: "*Ah! Maître Pierre, où serai-je ce soir?*"

We can fancy the tearful, wistful look, the terrified tremble of the hands, and all the voice broken up in sobs, with which she said this. Then, as the priest replied—"*N'avez vous pas bonne espèrance au Seigneur?*" the light of reassurance, the smile, the clasped hands, the heavenward gaze, the voice clear and fervid, as she said:—"*Oh! oui, Dieu aidant, je serai en Paradis!*"

Bound, and borne in a cart, like a common malefactor, surrounded by a guard of eight hundred English soldiers, Joan

D'Arc passed through the streets of Rouen, to the market-place; but in the eyes of the angels, that awful hour must have thrown into shade all foregone hours of triumph—grander to them was the pale martyr in her rude cart, hedged in by bristling lances, than the proudest conqueror in his triumphal car, followed by princely captives, and the spoils of kingdoms.

At the stake, the Maid again bravely proclaimed her faith in "the voices," and nobly defended her king. Her sublime, yet meek composure—her marvellous womanly sweetness filled many of her persecutors with wonder, pity, and vain remorse. The people looked on as in a horrible dream—weeping, groaning, praying, but powerless to help. One last word of reproach shivered the petrified heart of the Bishop of Beauvais—cleft its way to a deep, unsuspected vein of human feeling, and let it out in tears.

The scaffold towered high above the crowd, a huge pile of faggots, lit at the base—a gigantic altar of sacrifice, a fiery Calvary.

When the flames uncoiled themselves from below, and darted upward, in angry, flashing lengths, hissing and writhing—when they struck their sharp fangs into her flesh, the flesh cried out in shrieks that must have echoed for ever through the guilty and craven souls who heard.

Well had the young martyr learned the self-forgetful spirit of her Master. In the fierce height of her agony, through the flame and smoke of her torment, she saw the danger of the faithful priest who held the crucifix before her, and entreated him to leave her. He went; he bore from her sight the image of her crucified Lord, but he left beside her in the midst of the flames, the Lord himself. May not her last cry of "Jesus!" have been not a cry of fear, or supplication, but of joy and recognition, as she sprang through the fiery gate of martyrdom, into the welcoming arms of his compassion, into the bosom of his infinite, ineffable love!

MARGARET OF ANJOU.

No wandering princess of poetic fiction ever sustained more strangely varied chances during the course of her career than Margaret of Anjou. Her fitful periods of happiness and prosperity were bright as they were brief; while the magnitude of reverse she experienced,

> " Downright violence and storm of fortunes
> May trumpet to the world."

From her very birth, she entered upon this extraordinary blending of the most brilliant circumstances with the most calamitous events, which attended her through life, chequering her existence with alternate bursts of sunshine, and long dreary watches of deepest midnight, until death and the grave put their final shadows around her tempest-tost body, opening a prospect of endless light to her soaring spirit.

Her father, René of Anjou, had claims to a long train of titles; being the second son of Louis II., King of Sicily and Jerusalem, Duke of Calabria and Anjou, and Count of Provence. But his titular dignities brought him more harass than honour, and more adversity than advantage. Her mother was Isabella, heiress of Lorraine; a direct descendant of the renowned Charlemagne, and a princess endowed with virtue, eloquence, and beauty. But with

her princely patrimony, she brought the fruitful evil of a contested succession. Born of parents no less distinguished by their royal rank and lineage than by their personal merits, their accomplishments, love of learning, and taste for poetry and art, Margaret inherited greatness, beauty, and talent, as her birthright. She came into the world amid ushering grandeur, at one of the first castles in Lorraine, her mother's dower-palace, on the 23d of March, 1429. Her baptism took place with high ceremonial in the cathedral at Toul; a bishop performing the sacred rite, and royal sponsors standing for her at the font. But she was still an infant, when the struggle arising from the disputed succession to her mother's patrimony of Lorraine, called her father René to the field, that he might maintain his wife's claim against her uncle, Antoine de Vaudemonte, who, on the death of Charles, Duke of Lorraine, asserted his title to succeed instead of Isabella, Charles's grand-daughter. Margaret, before she was two years old, knew what it was to be held in a weeping mother's arms, to have ceaseless murmurs of alarm and anxiety breathed over her, to witness the tortures of suspense in which Isabella lived during the absence of her husband, and the burst of anguish with which the tidings of his defeat and capture at the battle of Bulgueville were received. It was serving an early apprenticeship to suffering and sorrow. She learned thus soon, too, a lesson in that spirit of resolution amidst adversity, which so signally distinguished herself through life. Her admirable mother, the affectionate wife, the noble-hearted duchess, roused herself from her agony of grief, and went to seek an interview with the victor, that she might strive to move his pity on behalf of her captive lord, and induce cessation of hostilities. Her kinsman, Antoine de Vaudemonte, conceded to her prayers thus much; he granted a truce of six months; but he was unable to liberate his niece's husband, having given him up to the Duke of Burgundy, who had

imprisoned René at Dijon, in a lofty tower. Here, with his characteristic tranquillity of temper, and love of art, Margaret's Provençal father whiled away the hours of his captivity, by applying himself to painting; and the chapel in the castle of Dijon still contains several miniatures and specimens of painted glass, executed by the tasteful royal prisoner. This gentle philosophy of seeking a resource from tedium and regret by employing the faculties in artistic pursuits, stood René in good stead; for the Duke of Burgundy was so well pleased at beholding his own portrait painted on glass among the productions of his accomplished prisoner, that he relented towards him, and agreed with Antoine de Vaudemonte, that he should be set at liberty. The conditions on which he was freed, were hard to fulfil: René's eldest daughter, Yolante, then but nine years old, was to be bestowed in marriage upon Antoine's heir, Ferrand de Vaudemonte, with a portion of the contested Lorraine territories for her dowry; his baby girl, Margaret, was to be betrothed to the Count St. Pol, whose squire had dealt the blow which prostrated her father on the battle-field of Bulgueville, leaving a scar that he carried to his grave; his two boys were to be delivered up as hostages; and he was under covenant to pay a large sum of money for his ransom. The meeting of the oppressed family, under these circumstances, was deeply pathetic; and the scene affected the heart of the child, Margaret, with a liveliness of emotion rarely shown at her tender years. The old chroniclers of Lorraine describe the sensibility evinced on this occasion by "the little creature" ["la petite créature"], as they called Margaret, to have been extreme. Even this reunion with his wife and children—sad, and overshadowed by drawbacks, as it was—proved but short-lived. The conditions of René's release were beyond his means to fulfil; and he was compelled again to surrender himself to captivity.

The death of the King of Naples, René's eldest brother, caused the succession to that crown to devolve upon Margaret's father; and the faithful wife prepared to assert his rights for him in his absence. Gifted with heroic qualities, with conjugal devotion, courage, and constancy, the Duchess Isabella ranks among the eminent women of her time. She was an early appreciater of the beautiful and gifted Agnes Sorel, whose merits won the friendship and esteem of the queen, notwithstanding that Agnes rivalled the royal wife in Charles VII.'s affections; and Isabella of Lorraine had been a beholder of Joan of Arc's noble conduct. From a mother so endowed with moral energy, Margaret inherited that high spirit and indomitable bravery of soul, which carried her through such a series of vicissitudes with ever-renewed animation in strength and purpose; while the early dwelling amidst perpetually recurring difficulties and trials, inured her to encounter the extremes of trouble and peril.

While taking measures for maintaining by force of arms her captive husband's claims upon the kingdom of Naples, Isabella assumed the title of Queen of the two Sicilies, and repaired with her children, Margaret and Louis, to the Chateau of Tarascon, on the banks of the Rhone. The boy, Louis, had been no longer retained as hostage when René had delivered himself up to bondage again; and the two beautiful children, with their mother, were idolized by the poetical Provençals, who fondly welcomed among them these representatives of their captive prince. Not long were they able to enjoy the kindly and picturesque homage which attended them in Provence; that fearful epidemic, the plague, spreading its terrors there, and menacing the danger of Isabella's children, she hastened to remove them from Tarascon, and they set sail for Naples.

Finding the pestilence from which they had fled, raging here,

Isabella established her residence at Capua, the ancient palace of the family of Anjou in Naples; and lost no time in causing her absent husband to be proclaimed king of the two Sicilies. At this ceremony, the two children, Margaret and Louis, sat beside their mother in the chair of state they occupied; and again the little girl, Margaret, passed through one of those strange episodes of her eventful life, when momentary splendour illumined her path, amid clouds of surrounding dark omen. Her queenly-acting mother, and her distant captive father; the triumphal state procession, amid pestilential threats of death hovering near; all affect the imagination with curious and oppressive contrast. Isabella spared no exertions to effect René's deliverance; and they produced a treaty for his liberation, which involved a remarkable clause. It was proposed by the Duke of Burgundy, that, "to cement the peace between the two powers, Margaret of Anjou, second daughter to King René, shall espouse the young King of England;" thus showing that the English alliance was contemplated as early as 1435, when the intended bride was but six years of age. This project was unsanctioned by the English, and, at this period, opposed by Charles VII.; it was merely a suggestion of the duke's, whose wife, the Duchess of Burgundy, was a Lancastrian princess, being daughter to the King of Portugal, by Philippa, John of Gaunt's daughter.

When René obtained his liberation, he made his entry into Naples at the head of a Provençal army, mounted on a superb white charger; and Isabella, with her children, removed from the Capuan palace to the luxurious one adorned by the late queen, Joanna II. In this voluptuous Italian sojourn, Margaret remained for some time, receiving her education from her brother's tutor, Antoine de Salle, under the care and superintendence of her mother; but this period of peaceful instruction, southern repose, and loving com-

panionship, was marred by the loss of her brother, Prince Louis, whose studies she had shared in affectionate fellowship.

In 1443, Margaret accompanied her royal mother in her return to Lorraine; the contract of marriage between herself and the Count St. Pol having been broken off, and her hand having been since sought by the Count de Nevers, nephew to the Duke of Burgundy. But as the marriage articles contained a clause that affected her sister Yolante's claims, the French King, Charles VII., interfered to prevent the union from taking place.

King René's patrimony was in a disastrous state; the troops of England occupied the territories of Anjou and Maine, and his finances were reduced so low, that he and his family were in actual penury. Their royal lineage, their high-sounding titles, served only to render their needy plight the more conspicuous; but although his wife Isabella felt these disadvantages keenly for the sake of their children, King René viewed them with his usual serenity, retiring into Provence, and occupying himself with verse-writing and musical composition, for both of which he had a talent.

By this time, Margaret had attained an age, when her youthful attractions gained her wide repute. The courts of France and Burgundy rang with her charms and accomplishments; and it was asserted that she not only possessed beauty and wit rarely equalled, but that her father's misfortunes had served merely to give her an opportunity of manifesting her lofty spirit and courage. The Duke of Burgundy's learned chronicler, Barante, declared that "there was no Princess in Christendom more accomplished than my lady Margaret of Anjou."

The rumour of Margaret's peerless graces had reached the ear of the young bachelor king of England, Henry VI.; and he despatched an emissary in whom he could confide, to the court of

Lorraine, for the purpose of procuring a portrait of this incomparable princess. The picture was obtained; it was painted by one of the best French artists, and did justice to the fair original. The gentleman of Anjou who had been entrusted with the royal commission, described the daughter of his sovereign in glowing colours; and his report seconded the effect produced by the painting. Moreover, the king's great-uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, and the French monarch, Charles VII., lent their combined influence to forward the proposed alliance.

The cardinal, who had superintended the education of his royal nephew, was aware of the want of energy and decision which formed the defects in his character, and he felt how desirable it would be, could Henry's future consort possess those qualities which might supply the young king's deficiencies; and, besides that Margaret's reputed endowments promised a fulfilment of those requisites—her youth and inexperience afforded likelihood that she would prove a valuable aid in promoting the cardinal's views of political influence and power.

The King of France, from a prospect of the advantages which would probably accrue to himself and kingdom from this union, and from the affectionate partiality he bore his young kinswoman, —Margaret being niece to Charles VII.'s queen, Marie of Anjou —did all in his power to further the marriage.

Henry VI. was then in his twenty-fourth year, handsome, cultivated, holy, and mild. He was of scrupulous morals, and bland demeanour. He is represented as finding no allurement in illicit pleasures; but earnestly desirous of securing the joys of wedlock.

The young king's uncle, Duke Humphrey of Gloster, and his great-uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, were at issue in the choice of a consort for their royal kinsman. The Duke of Gloster had a project for uniting Henry to a princess of the house of Armagnac; but the

bachelor monarch's fancy having been deeply enamoured by the reported and pictured charms of Margaret of Anjou, he resolved upon obtaining her for his queen at whatever cost. This cost was the sacrifice of Maine and Anjou; as the cession of those provinces was demanded by King René, when applied to for his daughter's hand.

After some little hesitation, this point, which formed an indispensable condition in the marriage articles, was agreed to; and the dowerless bride, whose beauty and merits were allowed "to outweigh all the riches in the world," was accorded to the eager suit of her royal wooer.

Suffolk, who was raised to the dignity of marquis, and invested with full powers to espouse the lady Margaret of Anjou, as proxy for his sovereign, set sail from England, accompanied by his marchioness, and a brilliant train of the nobility. The King of France, with the queen, and dauphiness, attended by the most distinguished personages of the French court, were assembled in Lorraine to do honour to the espousals of the youthful Margaret: and the ceremonial took place in the month of November, 1444.

The bride's father, King René, had ample scope for his taste in pageantry and courtly entertainments; a tournament was held in honour of the young Queen of England, at which the royal and illustrious guests there assembled performed gallant passages of arms. Charles VII. broke a lance in honour of his fair kinswoman; her uncle, Charles of Anjou, Pierre de Brezé, Lord of Varenne, and the Count St. Pol—formerly plighted to Margaret in infancy, but whose contract was subsequently broken off—all jousted on this occasion.

The fact that Suffolk did not appear in the lists, together with the circumstance of his age, which exceeded that of the bride's father, may suffice to contradict the alleged passion which fiction

writers have represented as existing between Margaret and her royal bridegroom's proxy. In the plays of Henry VI., the dramatist has given weight to the belief of their mutual attachment, where he has introduced Suffolk and Margaret; and some historians have confirmed his description; but all authentic evidence seems to bear testimony that there is no foundation for the scandal.

The festivities lasted for a period of eight days, during which the throng of princely and knightly gallants wore badges of the daisy-flower, in compliment to the royal bride of fifteen, who had chosen this flower for her emblem. Her name of Marguerite—which in her native tongue signifies also a daisy—had induced her adoption of this symbol. The reader may be reminded of Chaucer's lines:—

> "And at the last there began anon
> A lady for to sing right womanly
> A bargaret * in praising of the daisy;
> For, as methought, among her notès sweet,
> She said, '*si douce est la Marguerite.*'"

And also of that anecdote of high poetic taste; recording how the princess Margaret of Scotland, who married the Dauphin of France (afterwards Louis XI.), sent a tribute to a gifted woman, her namesake—the poetess, Clotilde Marguerite de Surville; the dauphiness's present consisted of a crown of laurel, surmounted by twelve daisies, with golden bosses and silver petals, twined in couples, bearing for device the words:—"Margaret of Scotland to Margaret of Helicon."

The way in which the youthful bride was taken leave of by her parents, friends, and kindred, bears witness to the affection with which she was regarded by those who best knew her. They

* Bargaret, bergerette, a little pastoral.

were not only proud of her, as one of the most accomplished and beautiful young creatures of her time; but they were fondly attached to her for her own sprightly graces, and attractive qualities. The king, Charles VII., is said to have clasped her repeatedly in his arms, at parting with her, and to have bidden her adieu with streaming eyes and a voice choked with sobs. The old chroniclers record his very words, so full of affectionate regard:—"I seem to have done nothing for you, my niece, in placing you on one of the greatest thrones in Europe, for it is scarcely worthy of possessing you." As for her gentle-hearted father, King René, he could only commend her to God, and fold her to his heart; neither father nor daughter could utter one word, but embraced each other in speechless farewell.

Thus were the splendours of her bridal followed by the tears of her friends and the mournfulness of parting. Thus, too, were the pomps of her travel towards England—escorted by a royal train, and protectively attended by the Marquis and Marchioness of Suffolk—but the precursors of after miseries. Through life it was Margaret's fate to be placed on the pinnacle of fortune, only to be precipitated with greater force into the abyss of mischance. Her first landing in England was heralded by a terrific storm; the cliffs of Albion were first visible to her amid sheeted lightning; and the shores resounded with peals of thunder. On arriving, she was seized with a dangerous malady, which detained her for a time at Southampton, in a religious hospital, called "God's house;" where, with the good old practice of such establishments, refuge was afford ed to all sick travellers—from the humblest pilgrim to royalty itself.

The nuptials of Henry VI. with Margaret of Anjou, were solemnized on the 22d of April, 1445, in Tichfield Abbey, with great magnificence; and the nation, although dissatisfied at the bride's portionless condition, yet could not withstand the mingled

impression of her youth, beauty, and noble presence, which procured her an enthusiastic reception wherever she appeared. The populace crowded to see her; while the nobility and chivalry of England wore the emblematic daisy fastened in their caps, on coming to meet and welcome the royal bride in her progress to London. The descriptions of her public entry into the city, and of her subsequent coronation at Westminster, on the 30th May, when a tournament was held which lasted three days, the lists occupying the entire space between Palace-yard and the sanctuary, show the youthful Margaret as forming the centre of courtly homage, and placed on the summit of resplendent prosperity.

For the time, Humphrey, Duke of Gloster, laid by his opposition to his royal nephew's chosen bride; and vied with the rest, in marks of welcoming courtesy. Cardinal Beaufort, who had been always favourable to the marriage, now that he learnt from personal proof how amply the young queen fulfilled her repute in beauty and spirited character, added fondness of liking to the partiality which rose from interest and policy.

The theme of universal admiration, idolized by the young king her husband, surrounded by the sumptuous regality of her position, Margaret stood within the full blaze of this period of sunshine, which streamed upon her when she first ascended the English throne; but her usual fate of brief triumph and long disaster, of short-lived glory and dark reverse, of transient felicity and protracted trouble, soon attended her. Like most fates of individuals, much of its peculiar colouring might be traced to her own complexion of character. Human complaint of destiny may most frequently with justice be resolved into self-investigation—if not self-rebuke. Margaret's fate, so remarkable in its features of alternate light and gloom, will be found to have singular analogy with the characteristics which distinguished her own moral conformation.

The stormy transition of her fortunes—now at the height of earthly advantage, now plunged in the depths of woful vicissitude—are curiously in keeping with the tempestuous vehemence of her own nature. A vivacious child, an indulgently-praised girl, a spoiled beauty, she grew into the imperious and haughty-spirited woman.

At this epoch of her career, she displayed the wilfulness of the spoiled beauty. She took pleasure in marking her remembrance that the Duke of Gloster had originally opposed her marriage with Henry, by contemptuous treatment, by making him feel her superior influence over the king, and by a pointed display of her preference for Cardinal Beaufort and the Duke of Suffolk, his political opponents.

Gloster was the idol of the people, who had surnamed him "Good Duke Humphrey;" and he was also heir presumptive to the throne, Margaret having as yet brought Henry no child, although the second year of her marriage had arrived. Cardinal Beaufort, the Duke of Somerset, his nephew, and the Duke of Suffolk at the head of the ministry, were instrumental in having the Duke of Gloster arrested, on a charge of high treason; and seventeen days after his arrest he was found dead in his bed. No marks of violence were to be found on his person; but the suddenness of his decease and the well-known animosity against him, led to suspicions of his having been unfairly dealt by. However, no proof could be adduced, and not the slightest contemporary evidence implicates the queen in the surmised deed. Her disregard of consequences, when she chose to avow predilection or avow dislike, was her chief error; and this was more a defect of judgment than a fault against morality. It hurt herself rather than any one else; for she had to suffer its penalty to the utmost.

This heedless manifestation of partiality it was, which subjected

her open display of regard for Suffolk to be misinterpreted. After Cardinal Beaufort's death, which followed immediately upon that of the Duke of Gloster, Margaret transferred the confidential attachment which she had borne the experienced old statesman, to him who was at present her natural adviser—the Duke of Suffolk being now at the head of the cabinet, and in this capacity the appointed counsellor of the crown. Thus considered, nothing could be more proper than Queen Margaret's having recourse to Suffolk for guidance; but her indiscreet wilfulness, her youthful recklessness, and her native impetuosity, let her pay no attention to the slanders it might give rise to, or the jealousies it might awaken.

There were not wanting hosts of foes to asperse her conduct, and take offence at her display of favouritism. The Duke of York, Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and his son, the Earl of Warwick, were all powerful, unscrupulous and ambitious nobles, and all inimical to the young queen. Party hatred ceased not until it effected the downfal of Margaret's earliest English friend, faithful adherent, and trusted minister. Suffolk was arraigned, arrested, and committed to the tower. He was sentenced to banishment; but met his death on board a vessel, in which he underwent a mock trial as a traitor, and his head, with his severed trunk, were flung upon Dover sands, where they were found by his chaplain, who gave them honourable burial.

It should not be omitted, that, during the brief interval of peace which permitted Margaret to give token what she might have proved had her reign been less disturbed by the fatal evil of war, she effected some substantial good for her subjects. Queen's College, Cambridge, owes its foundation to Margaret of Anjou: she also endeavoured to encourage the manufacture of silken and woollen goods; but the factious spirit of the times rendered peaceful occupation, and productive pursuits, ill suited to a people torn by

civil discord, and exhausted by foreign hostilities. Pestilence and want added their miseries to those of oppression and burdensome taxes; nay, disease and starvation were the necessary result of bad government and tyrannous exaction. Rebellion broke out; Jack Cade, a demagogue leader, headed the insurrection, and encamped on Black Heath with his armed mob. Henry VI. marched to meet them; and the tidings of his approach, with fifteen thousand troops, dispersed the insurgents, who fled to Seven Oaks.

Margaret betrayed a weakness of alarm on this occasion little consistent with the intrepidity of behaviour which afterwards distinguished her; but she was bewildered by fond apprehensions for her husband, whom she implored not to endanger his person, by pursuing the rebels in their flight. It was not until she became a mother that her affection and anxiety took the shape of daring. Then, the haughty courage which was the true quality of her disposition, assumed that fierce and dauntless strength, which no defeat could subdue.

Cade's rebellion was quelled as suddenly as it burst forth; and there is little doubt, from historic evidence, that it was the work of a higher faction, acting upon the goaded feelings of the populace. Most surging of the dregs of the people, might probably be traced to the influence of fermenting variances among those in the upper rank in the community. In the present instance, many circumstances tend to prove that the aspiring Duke of York was the instigator of the revolt. He had thrown up his official appointment in Ireland, and was now advancing upon London, attended by a retinue of four thousand men, and demanding of the king in bold terms that he should summon a parliament.

The timid Henry found some consolation in the arrival of the Duke of Somerset from his regency in France at this crisis; and Margaret was glad to receive aid and counsel from him, as nephew

of her old adviser, Cardinal Beaufort. But Somerset was unpopular among both Lords and Commons, who attributed to him the disasters in France and Normandy; and it was only after having been impeached, and committed to the Tower, by the Parliament, that he was released at the close of the session, and promoted to the post formerly filled by Suffolk—that of prime minister—on the exertion of all Margaret's authority, seconded by the king's, who personally liked his kinsman, Somerset.

This nobleman's violent temper was the cause of hastening into open feud the long-cherished animosities that had rankled between the houses of York and Lancaster. Historical tradition agrees in attributing to Somerset the act of first plucking the red rose, and desiring the by-standers to take each a flower of that hue, or a white one, as token of which cause he espoused, on the memorable occasion in the Temple garden, when each man had to declare the party he belonged to. The rival factions assumed those respective badges—the Lancastrians the red rose, and the Yorkists the white rose; and rarely did beautiful symbol serve to distinguish more deadly quarrel. Those fair blossoms witnessed the contentions which saturated English ground with English blood during two decades. For how many ferocious acts had the red rose to blush its deepest crimson! At how many ghastly deeds had the white rose to look its palest! Margaret, with her rash display of will, adopted the sanguine-hued rose at once,—but too fit emblem of her career thenceforth, when the field of battle, the perishing of those who fought for her, the death of those she best loved, carnage, ruin, and destruction, were to take the place of those morning years of life when the daisy, in its pearly freshness, was her chosen flower.

Now that the Duke of York stood forth in the unconcealed character of armed dictator to the throne, Margaret, and her

minister, Somerset, joined their persuasions to induce the king to advance to meet him in the field. Henry yielded to their urging; but parleyed, instead of fighting, with his assailant. York's demand chiefly involved the summary punishment of Somerset; attributing to a desire of bringing him to justice his own taking up arms on the present occasion. Somerset, who had been liberated from the Tower, where York believed him to be, was, by the queen's provision, stationed where he could overhear the conference between King Henry and the Duke of York; and upon hearing the latter's speech, so hostile to himself, burst from his lurking-place, defying York with his usual ungovernable violence. The rival duke retorted by equal fierceness; accusing him of misrule in France, and of occasioning the loss of Normandy. The king stood by, in dismay at this hot contention between the two fiery nobles; until York turned upon him, and reproached him with having broken his royal word. Henry had not been made a party to the concealment of Somerset behind the arras-hangings of the royal pavilion; and he was equally unaccessory to the Duke of York's arrest, which took place as he left the tent, and which was said to have been made by command of the queen. York was released, on condition of his swearing a solemn oath of fealty to the king; after which he was allowed to retire to his castle of Wigmore, where his son, the Earl of March, afterwards Edward IV., was raising an army for his rescue.

Somerset was thus established in his post at the head of the government; and the part Queen Margaret had in retaining him there, was made the ground of a similar calumny as the one which had been levelled against her reputation with regard to his predecessor, Suffolk. But both dukes were men past their prime of life, and both were devotedly attached to their wives. A letter written by the Duke of Suffolk during his imprisonment in the Tower,

bears touching witness of his strong affection for his wife, who was a grand-daughter of the poet Chaucer, and was a favourite friend of Queen Margaret; while Somerset's great love for his wife led him even to sacrifice his honour to tenderness for her person during the period of his regency in France. But party feeling, which spares no malice, and regards no probability in its venomous aspersions, did not fail to seize upon any slander, however wildly unfounded, to fling upon a queen, who was rashly unheedful of giving offence.

In the course of the brief calm which succeeded York's first hostility, Margaret gave her attention to foreign affairs, and caused the warrior, Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, to be sent, with such troops as could be levied, to the aid of the English force in Guienne. But factions at home, and war abroad, were formidable difficulties to contend with. The queen lost her loyal adherent, and gained no jot of advantage. The veteran Talbot was hewn down in battle at eighty years of age; and his death was accompanied by heaps of his slain followers.

The birth of Margaret's son was heralded by gloomy events. Want of success to the English arms in foreign fields; clamours of discontent within the realm; the loss of her high-souled mother Isabella of Lorraine, with whom her summer years had been spent, who had inspired her with all the best points of her character, and the bereavement of whose maternal sympathy was at this epoch most keenly felt, by one herself about to become a mother—combined to strain Margaret's powers of endurance with cruel tension. But a yet more bitter source of woe arose to demand her fortitude. King Henry was attacked by a malady which menaced him hereditarily:—he was the grandson of Charles VIth of France, who was subject to mental disease at frequent intervals. Henry, never very strong-headed, found the turmoil and fever of

difficulty under which he had of late years lived, too much for his brain; and the pressure of accumulated perplexities not only impaired his health, but produced aberration of reason. Blame has been thrown upon Margaret's assumption of royal power and authority, as unwomanly; but it is more than probable that she best knew the need there was for supplying her husband's lack of mental energy. When too, she has been accused of promoting his inclination for pursuits more befitting a monk than a monarch, it is likely that the wife was aware how incapable he was of attending to state business without vexation to his quiet temperament, and injury to his feeble constitution; and that therefore she took upon herself a discharge of duty which drew upon her the imputation of undue, and masculine activity in government affairs.

Henry VI. was in a condition of unconsciousness, and hovering between life and death, when his queen brought into the world their child—the hapless Edward of Lancaster, who seemed born to fulfil Margaret's doom of consociated brightness and bitterness. Her boy's beauty, his excellence, his rare promise in every respect, combined to gladden her motherly heart by forming the ideal of a princely son; while his perilous existence, and early death, brimmed her cup of anguish to overflowing.

At his very birth, Margaret's delight was dashed by counterbalancing troubles. The parliament appointed the Duke of York Protector of England, until such time as the king might be able to resume the reins of government, or the infant prince should arrive at years of discretion; while her thoughts were divided between loving attention to her child, and anxious attention to her husband in his melancholy state. She beheld her minister, Somerset, deposed from office by the newly-appointed protector, and found herself utterly deprived of regal controul during York's ascendency; but she strove to await calmly a better period; and gathered

comfort from tending her infant treasure. She maintained the form of state in her own person as Queen of England, continuing to hold her court, and grant audiences, although her queenly power was suspended.

This period of dignified patience, which so well became the royal Margaret, though her native impetuosity of character so seldom allowed her the practice of it, was rewarded by a visible amendment in the king's health, both of body and mind. He was at length sufficiently recovered for her to risk the excitement of presenting him their beautiful boy; and the father's happiness was expressed in words that manifested his proud satisfaction, as well as his sane condition of mind.

The queen's joy was complete: she took prompt measures for reinstating Henry in the possession of sovereign authority; and the Duke of Somerset was released from the Tower, to resume his post of prime minister. But, as usual, Margaret's hour of success was transient. The Duke of York withdrew to the Welch border; where, aided by his powerful friends and kinsmen, Salisbury and Warwick, he raised an army, and marched to London. Henry VI., as was his wont, tried what treating with the foe would do, before encountering him in battle:—he accordingly sent a messenger to the Duke of York, asking wherefore he came in hostile array against him. York refused to lay down his arms, unless the Duke of Somerset were dismissed from the council-board, and brought to justice. This drew from the king a spark of Plantagenet fire; for with the sole imprecation he was ever known to utter, he exclaimed, "that he would as soon deliver up his crown, as the Duke of Somerset, or the least soldier in his army; and that he would treat as a traitor every man who should presume to fight against him in the field."

The Earl of Warwick gave the signal for attack, by leading on

his men with the war-cry of "A Warwick! A Warwick!" The battle was brief, but furious; and after horrible slaughter on both sides,—the fight taking place in the narrow streets of St. Albans,—York became the victor. King Henry's conduct was characteristic: he stood meekly under his own standard during the combat; was wounded in the neck by an arrow; waited quietly till he found himself the only man left beneath the royal banner; and then walked composedly into a baker's shop near at hand. The Duke of York came to him there, and with ruffianly want of delicacy, and want of feeling, bade him "rejoice, for the traitor, Somerset, was slain." Henry, with holy mildness, and the charity for his species which distinguished him, and made him ever hold bloodshed in horror,—characteristics more especially becoming him at this juncture, when he had just proved that he did not want for spirit upon his kingly honour being insulted; nor for courage in exposing his own person to danger—replied by the words:—"For God's sake stop the slaughter of my subjects!"

The news of the blow which the royal cause had sustained by defeat in the battle of St. Albans, stunned Queen Margaret into despairing grief. She saw her husband dangerously wounded, and reduced to his former insane condition; for pain and agitation had brought on a relapse of his malady. He was pronounced incapable of attending to public business; the Duke of York ruled in the king's name; and the parliament, composed of Margaret's enemies, passed a censure upon her late government.

Henry, wholly in the Duke of York's power, was constrained to confirm his appointment to the protectorate; although, notwithstanding his reason was deranged, he manifested extreme unwillingness to the step; and York, once having secured the executive command, allowed Margaret the custody of the king's person, and caused her to remove from London with her husband, and the in-

fant prince. She applied herself to the care of these helpless ones, giving them all dutiful attention; while secretly, she sought to strengthen their interest, and sustain their cause, by maintaining constant intercourse with the red-rose party. All the Lancastrians, —including those who were allied to the royal blood, those of noble and gentle birth, and those, whose fathers having been slain at St. Albans, were eager to avenge their fate,—Margaret contrived to hold communication with, making herself their rallying point.

Thus prepared, the queen lost no time, the instant her consort's restoration to health afforded opportunity, in causing him to present himself suddenly before his parliament. Unknown to the Duke of York this step was arranged;—and on the 24th February, 1456, the king entered the House of Lords, when York, and the principal members of his faction were absent, declaring:—"that being now, by the blessing of God, in good health, he did not think his kingdom was in any need of protection, and requested permission to resume the reins of empire." The Parliament, taken by surprise at this unexpected appearance of their Sovereign among them, and struck with the collected and dignified manner of his address, immediately acceded to his desire. King Henry thereupon sent to the Duke of York, requiring his resignation of office. This decisive measure of the queen's, (for it was all her act,) left her enemies no course but to submit for the time being; and York, Salisbury, and Warwick, withdrew into the provinces.

With her usual pertinacious exercise of will, Margaret appointed Henry Beaufort, heir to the late Duke of Somerset, as prime minister.

It was by such marked acts of imperious resolve, upon every fresh opportunity of showing her power, that Margaret ever provoked hostility and aversion. She seemed determined to oppose,

instead of conciliate her adversaries; and that conduct never wins a nation's regard—especially in a female sovereign. Margaret not only gave her enemies occasion to asperse her, but she weakened the approval and confidence of the people. Even at this period when, in many respects, she exercised wise and able rule, her vehement disposition, and impetuous temper, caused her to irritate the Londoners by untimely interference and constraint: and although she won respect and esteem by the way in which she fulfilled her conjugal and maternal duties,—devising every means of calming her royal partner's easily-disturbed mind by the means of music and other genial recreations,—yet, her want of judgment in knowing how properly to influence the public mind, prevented her gaining as much popular favour as her many high qualities deserved. Her talents were marred by want of tact: she was indiscreetly rash; and injudiciously resentful. A less clever woman with more prudence would have won more liking from her subjects; a less spirited woman with more discretion would have inspired greater confidence and attachment.

Meanwhile France and Scotland took advantage of England's internal divisions to attack her; and the queen was compelled to promote reconciliation between the antagonist parties at home in order to meet the threatened assaults from abroad. A general pacific congress took place; wherein York, Salisbury, Warwick, of the white-rose faction; and Margaret, Exeter, the Percys, and the Royal family, as representatives of the red-rose interest, assembled in the capital, and a solemn covenant was pledged by these conflicting elements,—water and fire themselves, not more antagonist to amalgamation.

Innumerable rancours, discords, and difficulties necessarily arose; while Henry, leaving his queen to solve as she best might the problem of their arrangement, retired to the abbey of St. Albans.

Mutual recrimination kindled into tumult and sedition; and at length flamed to such height as afforded pretext to the three great factious leaders, York, Salisbury, and Warwick, to burst once more into open aggression against the house of Lancaster.

At Northampton, York's son, Edward, Earl of March, attacked the Lancastrian host; and ten thousand English strewed their native earth; while King Henry was taken prisoner, and Margaret with her princely boy, fled for refuge to a remote fortress in North Wales.

In the hands of his foes, Henry became a mere passive victim. He was made to surrender his son's claims to the royal succession of England, with the empty permission to retain the crown during his own lifetime. News of this fatal abandonment of their child's birthright reached Margaret; but instead of quelling her spirit into despondency, it roused it into exertion. She went straight to the court of Scotland, succeeded in obtaining succours from the monarch there—who had Lancastrian blood in his veins—and took her measures with such promptitude and vigour that she led the red-rose army, reinforced by the best strength of the northern counties of England, to the field, before the Yorkists knew that she was approaching. Beneath the walls of Sandal Castle, Margaret, at the head of eighteen thousand men, defied the Duke of York to come forth and do battle with her. The practised soldier, stung by this challenge from a woman, and not greatly believing that either military skill or warlike valour were hers, quitted his stronghold, and met the queen's commanders, Somerset, Wiltshire, and Clifford, on the plain. York was killed, his army routed; and the ferocious Clifford, after slaying the young Earl of Rutland in cold blood, struck the duke's head from his body, crowned it with paper, and presented it on the point of a lance to Queen Margaret, with a light speech of derision. It is recorded that she at first

shuddered and turned pale, but afterwards—laughed;—*laughed!* But it is not impossible that this might have been an hysterical agitation—the result of mingled emotions of excitement; of resentment, of physical disgust at the ghastly sight, with crowding thoughts of the enmity long borne to her husband, her boy, and herself, by him whose pale face now lay crowned in mockery at her foot. It is, however, but too true, that she ordered this horrible trophy of her triumph to be placed over York gates; adding—with the headlong arrogance which disgraced her demeanour in the hour of success—that she desired "room might be left between the heads of York and Salisbury for those of the Earls of March and Warwick, which she intended should soon keep them company."

Fluctuating fortune attended the arms of the red rose and the white rose for some time, during which Margaret maintained the rights of her royal husband and son with unflinching courage and constancy, through alternate prosperity and disaster. In the course of an appeal to France—where her crafty cousin, Louis XI., now reigned—Margaret's gradually-sinking cause was espoused by the chivalrous Pierre de Brezé, who attached himself to her service with an enthusiasm and devotion, fervent to a degree of romance. He had been minister and favourite to Margaret's uncle, Charles VII.: he had appeared in the lists at her bridal tournament as a champion of the "douce Marguerite," the "gentle daisy-flower," in the time of her youthful beauty and happiness; and now that she came a forlorn wanderer, a princess bereft of crown and kingdom, suing for aid on behalf of her husband and child despoiled of their rights, De Brezé proffered his knightly duty with an ardour as much surpassing his former homage, as the battle exceeds the joust.

This gallant gentleman fought for Queen Margaret in the

bloody field of Hexham; from which she, in mortal terror for her son's life, fled with him on foot through the neighbouring forest, until encountered by a band of freebooters; whose cupidity being awakened by the rich attire of the fugitive mother and child, possessed themselves of their jewels and more valuable apparel. While the men were disputing over the division of the booty, Margaret snatched her boy up in her arms, and sped away from the marauders; but upon meeting with another of the troop, alone, she summoned her usual spirit and self-possession; stepped forward with her little son in her hand, and presenting him to the robber, exclaimed:—"Here, my friend, save the son of your king!" The man, struck with her beauty and majesty, as well as with the boy's interesting and helpless appearance, turned his aspect of menace into protection; and led them to a cave, where he sheltered them for two days. Local tradition has preserved record of the exact spot—a low cave in Hexham forest; and here they were discovered by the faithful knight, Sir Pierre de Brezé, who, with his squire, Barville, had been seeking the queen with sleepless diligence. On taking leave of the outlaw and his wife, Margaret poured forth her thanks, as all she had left to bestow; while her adherents would have added some reward from their own scanty supply of money; but the worthy couple, with a generosity and delicacy that would have honoured any station, declined receiving what must be so needful to the little band of royal fugitives in their wanderings; and the queen, whose own nature made her peculiarly able to appreciate dignity of feeling, exclaimed, "Of all I have lost, I regret nothing so much as the power to recompense such virtue."

Margaret and the young prince, with their loyal friends, hastened to Carlisle and thence to Kircudbright. Here, the queen, whose royal bearing and beauty made her unable to elude obser-

vation, was recognized by a Yorkist partisan; and he lost no time in securing the persons of the wanderers. Margaret's noble protector, De Brezé, and his squire, were seized and hurried on board a vessel; while the queen and her young son were also conveyed thither: though until the dawn of morning light, they were severally unaware of their having been captured. But De Brezé, who among his other knightly qualities, possessed that of uncommon personal strength, had succeeded in freeing himself from his bonds during the night; and when he had effected the same liberation for his squire, the two set upon the boat's crew; and after a desperate struggle, in which they slew some, and threw others overboard, they remained masters of the craft. A gale was blowing; and after tossing some hours in the Solway Frith, the boat was driven on a sandbank, near Cantyre; and it was only by De Brezé's wading through the breakers, and bearing the queen to the shore, while Barville carried the young prince in his arms, that they succeeded in landing safely. Margaret took refuge in one of the obscure hamlets of this wild district, under the guardian care of De Brezé; while Barville went to gather tidings of the then condition of Lancastrian hopes. It was such as to leave Margaret no other chance for the present, than to stand aloof, and abide the coming of better times. She, with her son and a small retinue, who clung to their royal mistress, embarked for Flanders, where some of the red-rose party had taken refuge; but the foul weather, which invariably attended Margaret's expeditions with a gloom of disaster similar to that which perpetually overshadowed her fortunes in her progress through life, assailed her on the present occasion. A tempest arose of such violence, that every moment threatened destruction; and when the rage of the hurricane had somewhat subsided, the ship was compelled to put into port on the dominions of Margaret's hereditary enemy, the Duke of

Burgundy. However, she was received with respect, and provided not only with honourable escort to the south, but with a pecuniary supply, when it had been made known how ill able she was to requite the aid she had received from her faithful Lancastrian followers, the ladies of her train, and those loyal champions who had lost their all in her service.

The affairs of the poor old Provençal King, René, were in no condition to offer his hapless daughter more than a bare asylum in her adversity; but this he made her welcome to, with all the simplicity and gentle philosophy which characterized him. There Margaret remained for seven years, watching the growth and improvement of her boy, under the judicious education of Sir John Fortescue, who devoted himself to the young prince's instruction. History records nothing farther of Sir Pierre de Brezé, after his attending Queen Margaret in safety to the court of Burgundy.

Meanwhile, King Henry had been subjected to ignominious imprisonment in the Tower; and the reigning sovereign, Edward IV., evinced a dread of Margaret's well-known courageous spirit of perseverance, by maintaining a kind of coast-guard, to prevent her making a sudden descent upon the English shores. It has been affirmed that Margaret did visit Britain during the period, in the disguise of a priest, in the train of the Archbishop of Narbonne; and such an adventure would by no means be improbable, from a woman of her romantic boldness and impetuosity of character.

In the year 1469, she came forth from her retirement, and repaired with Prince Edward to Tours; where a family royal meeting was held for the purpose of taking into consideration the best means of once again striving to uphold the Lancastrian cause. It was on this occasion, that the wily and cold-blooded Louis XI. contrived to win the haughty-spirited Margaret into a politic re-

conciliation with her ancient foe, the Earl of Warwick, surnamed "the king-maker;" who had broken with the Yorkist party, and was ready to engage in dethroning Edward IV. With the greatest difficulty, Margaret was prevailed upon to pardon Warwick: but, once granted, the cat-like Louis seized upon this concession, to make it the ground for proposing an alliance between her son, Prince Edward, and the Earl's youngest daughter, the Lady Anne. At first nothing could induce Margaret to listen to this suggestion; she treated it with open contempt; but at length, upon being urged by the counsellors of her father, King René, gave her consent. The marriage took place the next year; and the year succeeding that, Queen Margaret hearing that Warwick had obtained the freedom of her royal husband, and had re-possessed him of his kingdom, she prepared to set sail for England. But, as usual, the weather put on its most frowning aspect, when Margaret's enterprises were at stake. Perpetually beaten back, the elements seemed to act in concert against her fleet, to prevent its reaching the English shores. Three times did she put forth from Harfleur, before she could get to sea; and when there, sixteen wearisome days and nights did the queen pass in a fever of burning impatience, tossing about the channel, vainly striving to make the passage. At last, she landed but to hear the fatal tidings of the death of Warwick, and the recapture of the king, Henry, at the battle of Barnet; and scarcely had she revived to entertain hopes from the last brave struggle of the Lancastrian party, at the field of Tewkesbury, than she was stricken into life-long despair by the news of her princely son's overthrow and death there.

Margaret of Anjou, with the youthful widow of her Edward, were brought in the train of the victor to London; where, immured in the dungeons of the Tower, she became a widow on the night of her arrival—King Henry having been murdered there, that same time, by Richard, Duke of Gloster.

After a period of blank desolation, Margaret was ransomed by her kindly old father, King René, at the sacrifice of his inheritance of Provence, which he ceded to the griping claw of Louis XI. for half its value, in order to rescue his daughter from captivity. Bereaved, heart-broken, dead to all living interests, the once high-spirited Margaret passively signed a formal renunciation of all her claims upon England, and took her way to her old Provençal home;—that spot she had quitted in all the beauty and brilliancy of hope, youth, and royal fortune.

Sir Walter Scott's fine picture of the red-rose queen at this period of her withered life, in his romance of "Anne of Geierstein," is conceived with rich fancy. But forcibly as it pourtrays her passionate despair, the fearful reality of historic truth outdoes its impressive delineation. The records of the chroniclers represent her as utterly and awfully changed in person by the torture of her inward anguish:—the whole mass of her blood turned; her eyes, once so bright and flashing with expression, now hollow, dim, and inflamed from incessant weeping:—her skin disfigured by a dry, scaly leprosy, which converted this once renownedly beautiful princess into a spectacle of horror.

Scott has given her a picturesque death, amid the (to her) most distasteful recreations of her artistically disposed old father; but, in fact, she survived him, though only for a short period—expiring in her fifty-first year.

The anachronisms and inaccuracies committed in the three parts of Henry VI., form one of the testimonies against their being the production of Shakespeare. He who so strictly adhered to the spirit and almost to the letter of history, making its facts available in dramatic purpose, and rarely violating them, save for express requirement, would never have so misplaced events as are there transposed. Far less would he so thoroughly have misrepresented

and degraded the high-spirited Margaret, by making her the grossly lawless wife and termagant Amazon which she appears in those plays. He never penned that Billingsgate altercation between the famed Princess of Anjou and the Duchess of Gloster in the 3d scene of the 1st Act of the second of those dramas. Isolated passages in them, it is true, wear his manner; but the whole conduct of the three plays has little of his system of Art. But the character of the dethroned queen, as she subsequently appears in the tragedy of Richard III., lurking near the purlieus of the dismal Tower, invoking curses upon her triumphant foes, roaming to and fro, with wearied yet restless pace, around the scenes of her lost greatness, like some cub-bereft lioness, is indeed true to the style of the prince of poets; and that one epithet where she speaks of

> "Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey,
> Untimely smother'd in their *dusky graves*,"

stamps the portrait as being from his master-hand.

The story of Margaret of Anjou, is pregnant with lessons in moral conduct. Arbitrary during her seasons of authority and power, arrogant in success, imprudent in emergency, vindictive in wrong, she forfeits the respect which her courageous dignity amid adversity would otherwise inspire.

Her eventful course is picturesquely in keeping with her individual nature. The tempestuous weather which attended her movements, and the murky storm-clouds of calamitous fate which perpetually hung over her life's career, are akin to the stormy grandeur of her own character.

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

Isabella of Castile is a noble instance of a character based upon principle. Her nature was full of fine impulses; but her acts were the result of principle. Her heart first dictated her conduct, then her reason approved it; and the result was, a woman and princess of almost matchless excellence. Her reign was an era in her country, and left lasting blessings to mark its existence. Her affections were pure; her passions were lofty. Love for her people, with love of her husband and children, a tender reverence for her mother, and constancy of attachment towards her chosen friends, formed her fondest feelings; while a thirst for glory was her strongest desire. She possessed natural qualities which enabled her to achieve glory; she was surrounded by circumstances from youth that fostered her native powers of mind, and her life abounded with events that both matured her innate qualifications and ministered to her propensities for glory. She was an example of those who owe less to book-learning than to life-learning. She had powers of observation which rather took aliment from vital occurrences, than from written precepts; and she acquired her education rather from her own experience than from set lessons. Withal, she had the fine sense to supply whatever deficiencies early teaching might have left, by her own subsequent diligence in

acquiring such knowledge as she felt needful. Several modern languages she was acquainted with, and was an elegant mistress of her own; but being uninstructed in the Latin tongue, she resolved to accomplish herself in what was at that time so much used as a medium of intercourse between learned men, and for the purposes of international diplomacy and negotiation. Amidst her multiform state avocations, she found time to gain in less than a year a sufficient mastery of Latin, to enable her to comprehend readily whatever was written or spoken in that language. What may be called her practical education, was derived through the school of actual circumstance which surrounded her from childhood. She was born in 1450; and was the daughter of John II., King of Castile, by a second marriage. Her father's son, by the first marriage, Henry IV., surnamed "the Impotent," succeeded to the throne; and during his humiliating reign, Isabella had an opportunity of gathering those first seeds of state training, which afterwards germinated into such goodly harvest of garnered wisdom in policy and government. From the disorders which disgraced her brother's period of rule—or rather misrule, and from the spirit of faction which ran high among the grandees and court officials, Isabella quietly drew those instructive lessons of discretion and foresight which afterwards stood her in such good stead when she herself was called to reign.

Her earliest years, after her father's death, were spent in retirement with her mother; and here she imbibed that devout regard for religion, which influenced her so powerfully through life. On the birth of the infanta Joanna, Henry brought Isabella and her young brother Alfonso to inhabit the palace, lest the factions nobles might make either of them the object of a party, to the prejudice of Joanna's claims; but the seductive pleasures of a court —where levity and license were but thinly veiled by splendour and

magnificence—had no power to undermine the morals of one whose virtue was firmly founded in faith and principle. The dissolute conduct of the queen, together with other confirmatory circumstances, gave rise to suspicion of Joanna's illegitimacy, and the princess was so generally reputed to be the daughter of the king's favourite, Don Beltran de la Cueva, that she was popularly surnamed "La Beltraneja."

The grandees, leagued in revolt against Henry IV., publicly deposed him, and swore allegiance to the youthful prince Alfonso—then only eleven years of age; and a civil war ensued, which lasted till the child-king died.

On the death of her young brother, Isabella retired from court, and withdrew to Avila, where the Archbishop of Toledo, on behalf of the confederate nobles, tendered her the crown lately awarded to Alfonso. But Isabella, guided equally by principle and prudence, declined becoming queen of Castile during the lifetime of her brother Henry. She judiciously permitted them to nominate her Princess of the Asturias, which was tantamount to declaring her heir-apparent to the throne; and a reconciliation was effected between the contending parties. An interview took place between Henry and Isabella; wherein he was made to recognize her as his royal successor. In the compact, dictated by the nobles, and ratified by the Cortes, there was stipulation that Henry should divorce his notoriously profligate queen; and that Isabella, while promising not to marry without her brother's consent, should not be constrained to marry in opposition to her own wishes.

That this latter clause was not superfluous, is evident from Henry's having arranged an alliance for his sister, when she was in her sixteenth year, so repugnant to her inclinations, from the known dishonourable character of the intended bridegroom, that upon hearing of its proposal, she shut herself in her room, took neither

food nor sleep for a day and night, and implored of heaven to save her from so detested a fate either by her own death or that of her foe.

Her prayers were heard; for a rapid attack of illness carried off the dreaded Master of Calatrava when on his road to claim his bride. In another proposed union, where disparity of years pointed out its ineligibility, she had evinced steadfast resolution; for neither menaces nor entreaties could move her to consent to what her reason told her was ill-judged. With address, judicious beyond that which her youth and sex generally possess, she declined the match urged by her brother, on the plea that "the infantas of Castile could not be disposed of in marriage without the consent of the nobles of the realm."

Now that Isabella's succession to the crowns of Castile and Leon was legally established, her hand was sought in marriage by several of the principal sovereigns of Europe. A brother of Edward IV. of England—in all likelihood, Richard Duke of Gloucester; the King of Portugal; the Duke of Guienne, brother to Louis XI. of France; and Ferdinand, the Prince of Arragon, were all suitors to Isabella of Castile.

Had "mis-shapen Richard" been the successful applicant, who knows how this noble-spirited woman, bringing him a throne to share in occupying, and a mind to help in swaying, might have prevented his launching upon that dark sea of crime and ambition which whelmed him in its blood-stained tide; and how her active intelligence might have operated to aid his able intellect in finding fit channels for its abundant resources. With such a woman at his side through life, the mental strength of Richard might have been put to virtuous and valuable use, instead of being exercised in compassing usurpation, treason, and murder.

As it was, Isabella's choice fell upon Ferdinand of Arragon.

Many circumstances conduced to incline her to turn an eye of favour upon him. State reasons pointed to the advantages which arose from an alliance where descent from one common stock, uniformity of language, and similarity of customs, promised mutual conformity of opinions and views; while the relative positions of their respective kingdoms, seemed to indicate that conjoined into one monarchy, the two subordinate states might become a powerful European sovereignty. Popular opinion, too, greatly leaned towards the Arragonese alliance; and the people's preferences had ever great weight with Isabella. Besides these public motives, there were private ones that had their influence upon the womanly nature of the young princess. Ferdinand was comely in person, gallant of bearing, and distinguished for knightly bravery and accomplishment. He had given tokens of possessing staid judgment, although still in the flower of his age; and he possessed both spirit and grace.

Isabella was goaded into making immediate selection among her suitors, by the injurious treatment she received from her brother; who infringed almost every article of the compact, and tyrannously urged her union with the King of Portugal. Feeling herself released from her portion of the treaty, by his violation of engagement, she sought the concurrence of the leading nobles, and supported by their approval, she sent a favourable reply to Arragon, without further consulting Henry.

While the marriage articles were being drawn up,—and they were framed with every regard to Castilian national feeling, so as to preserve the people's rights from encroachment, and to restrict Isabella's husband from trenching upon her exclusive prerogatives of Queen of Castile and Leon in her own right,—she took up her abode under the protection of her mother, in order to await the result of the negotiations with Arragon. But Henry's suspicions

being awakened, attempts were set on foot by him and his partisans, to obtain forcible possession of his sister's person; and Isabella sending word to her friends, Admiral Henriquez, and the Archbishop of Toledo, she was rescued from her hazardous position, and borne in safety to Valladolid, where she was received by the citizens with enthusiasm.

There being considerable difficulty in the Prince of Arragon's coming to Castile, where such hostile jealousy and espial surrounded his intended bride, he resolved,—with the chivalrous spirit which formed a part of his character, and the touch of romance which coloured his age and nation,—to proceed thither in disguise, attended by a few trusty adherents only, attired as merchants. His arrival was hailed with joy by the little court at Valladolid. Isabella's first care,—with her usual excellent sense and discretion,—was to address a letter to her brother Henry, informing him of her intended marriage; and then, an interview having been arranged between the royal pair, the Archbishop of Toledo conducted the Prince of Arragon to the presence of the Infanta. Ferdinand was then in his eighteenth year; Isabella, one year older. They were a handsome couple. Ferdinand's naturally fair complexion was sunburned into manliness by exposure to the field; his well-formed frame was knit into vigour by military exercises; and his fluency of speech was polished into courteous address, when desirous of gaining a point. He had a quick, sprightly eye, and a broad, high forehead. Isabella's height was inclined to tall; she had a clear, fresh colour, with auburn hair, and eyes of radiant blue,—rare peculiarities in Spanish beauty. Her personal charms were enhanced by a graciousness and benignity of manner the most winning; while dignity and modesty were so equally blended in her demeanour, that she was no less womanly than queenly.

The public celebration of the marriage took place on the 19th October, 1469; and the nuptials were solemnized in the presence of Ferdinand's grandfather, the Admiral of Castile, the Archbishop of Toledo, and a large number of the nobility.

Henry, incensed at this act of independence on the part of his sister, declared that she had forfeited her claims by marrying without his approval, and abrogated his nomination of Isabella as his successor. He and his queen took an oath affirmative of Joanna's legitimacy, and went through the farce of affiancing the princess, then in her ninth year, to the Duke of Guienne, with the view of securing the aid of France in support of her pretensions to the throne.

Ferdinand and Isabella were so ill-provided with funds, that the very money requisite for defraying the expenses of their marriage had been borrowed; and now, they possessed scarcely sufficient to supply the ordinary cost of their daily table. Moreover, the presence of her husband, so needful to sustain the spirits of Isabella's Castilian party, was about to be withdrawn; for the King of Arragon was engaged in contentions with Louis XI., that placed him in a perilous situation, and Isabella was the first to urge Ferdinand to march to his father's relief.

While he was engaged in Arragon, Isabella's influence augmented the strengthening of their mutual cause in Castile. Her own virtuous discretion, and the decorum of those she maintained around her, tended to inspire confidence in her fitness for rule, while it contrasted nobly with the levity, rapacity, and profligacy of those who formed Henry's court. During the interval that ensued, Isabella gradually but securely won the esteem of her future subjects; and when her brother's imbecile reign came to a close by his death, she succeeded to his throne, with the sanction of the Cortes. A herald formally proclaimed: "Castile, Castile for the

king Don Ferdinand, and his consort, Doña Isabella, queen proprietor (as we should say, queen in her own right, or queen regnant) of these kingdoms!" Isabella received the homage of her subjects, swore to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, and repaired to the cathedral church; where, when Te Deum had been chanted, she offered up thanksgiving, and invoked the Divine blessing upon her future endeavours to discharge the high trust which devolved upon her, with equity and wisdom—and nobly did she fulfil this, her coronation oath.

On Ferdinand's arrival from Arragon, the respective authority to be exercised by the royal husband and wife in the administration of government was discussed; and upon the issue of this discussion resulting in a decision that Isabella, as sole heiress of the dominions of Castile and Leon, was entitled to all the essential rights of sovereignty (while whatever authority Ferdinand might hold, could only be derived through her), he was so ill-pleased, that he spoke of returning to Arragon. But Isabella, with affectionate reasoning, succeeded in soothing his marital susceptibility; and by representations of equal truth and gentleness, won him to perceive that their interests were uniform. With wifely skill, she healed his wounded pride, while preserving uncompromised her royal trust.

One of the first acts in common of the sovereigns, was to meet effectually a coalition of those nobles who supported Joanna's party, and who, joining with the King of Portugal, declared war against Ferdinand and Isabella. Unprepared for Alfonso's invasion, they made vigorous exertions for resistance. Isabella employed whole nights in dictating despatches to her secretaries; and encountered personal fatigue with indomitable resolution. She performed arduous journeys on horseback, for the sake of herself inspecting and encouraging those garrisons where she deemed such

stimulus requisite; and shrank from no exertion that might ensure allegiance, although her situation at that time demanded repose. The risk of injury to her constitution, and of seeing her maternal hopes frustrated, could not deter her from pursuing her duty as a ruler. Her sense of queenhood ever kept pace with her sense of womanhood; and she was as mindful of what she owed to her people, as of what she owed to her husband, her children, and herself.

Thanks to her extraordinary exertions, in conjunction with those he himself made, Ferdinand was able to advance at the head of a considerable force, upon the invading army. After varying success during the campaign,—in the course of which, Isabella evinced on several occasions the punctilious regard for Castilian rights, and the scrupulous probity and rectitude which distinguished her—victory at the battle of Toro decided the war in favour of Ferdinand and Isabella. The King of Portugal withdrew his pretensions; those of Joanna were set at rest by her retirement into a convent; and the undisputed possession of Castile which thus accrued to the sovereigns, was shortly after followed by Ferdinand's succeeding to the crown of Arragon, by the death of his father, in 1479. The two kingdoms of Arragon and Castile were united under the joint sovereignty of Ferdinand and Isabella, and became the important European monarchy it has since been.

While the military accomplishments of Ferdinand found such ample scope in obtaining advantages for the state, Isabella's fine mental powers, and indefatigable energy, were employed in governmental reforms calculated to improve the social condition of her people. Although her husband's able judgment aided her own, yet his policy was of a less upright and pure character than Isabella's; she was incapable of an indirect or unworthy procedure, while Ferdinand was less absolutely controuled by strict principle in his course of action. Happily for her subjects, the

internal administration of Castile fell chiefly within the province of their queen to regulate—and nobly she executed the charge. Their welfare—present and permanent—was her highest aim, her dearest care. Few young queens have been able to effect the substantial improvements in administrative rule that Isabella established during the first portion of her reign. Before the year 1482 most important measures were already adopted, and put into active operation. For the efficient protection of the country, and for the attainment of the ends of justice, Isabella persevered in re-organizing the Santa Hermandad, or Holy Brotherhood, an association which formed a system of police, taking within its jurisdiction offences regardless of the rank of offenders. The opposition which the queen met with from the nobility—who found this new system likely to interfere with their hitherto unchecked oppression of the powerless—was counterbalanced by the popularity of the institution among those for whose behoof it was put in force. The consciousness of acting for the true benefit of her people, and the recognition they evinced of their queen's solicitude for their advantage, supported her through all difficulties, and gained her the unalterable attachment of those she swayed. An instance of her power over the hearts of the populace, and of her own self-possession and reliance upon them, is exemplified in an incident which is recorded to have taken place at Segovia, during an insurrectionary tumult of the citizens. They assembled in great numbers before the citadel, calling out, "Death to the Alcayde! Attack the castle!" Isabella's terrified attendants entreated their mistress to order the gates to be more strongly guarded; but she quietly descended into the courtyard, and stationing herself there, ordered the portals to be thrown wide open. On the insurgents pouring in, she calmly addressed them, bidding them tell her their grievances, and promising that she would do all in her power to

redress these, as she was sure that what was for their interest, must be also for hers, and for that of the whole city. Her composure and dignity, together with her thus making their cause her own, allayed their wrath, and gained her time to examine into the justice of their complaints; while by her presence of mind, she quelled without compromise of royal supremacy, a disturbance in its commencement which might have grown into a serious outbreak.

She went herself into the provinces where disaffection and anarchy prevailed, for the purpose of enquiring into delinquencies, composing feuds, and reforming abuses, notwithstanding the remonstrances her ministers made against endangering her safety. Nothing deterred her, where duty and principle called for exertion on her part. She revived the ancient practice of the Castilian sovereigns, of presiding in person over the administration of justice; and she weekly took her seat on a chair of state, surrounded by her council, receiving suits referred to her decision—thus saving the usual cost and delay of equitable adjustment. Her method in business, and energy of mind, caused admirable despatch in the transaction of affairs; and she disposed of so many civil and criminal causes within a short space, that it struck terror into the hearts of plunderers and culprits. The certainty with which law was executed, regardless of wealth that could purchase release from penalty, or rank that could obtain impunity, contributed greatly to secure respect for legal institutions, during the reign of Isabella. She herself was superior to all mercenary motive; and no sophistry could bias her honest convictions on this head. Besides the judicatory reforms, Isabella salutarily restricted the nobility's overgrown power, preserved the ecclesiastical rights of the crown from papal usurpation, ordained commercial and trade regulations, and maintained royal authority. The private characters, no less than the public measures of Ferdinand and Isabella, tended

to secure their regal supremacy. Their talents, their sage conduct, their dignity—moral, intellectual, and personal—commanded respect, and inspired confidence. But while Ferdinand's wisdom was shrewd and worldly, Isabella's was virtuous and disinterested. She used her high endowments for patriotic purposes, and devoted her whole soul to exalted aims.

There can be no doubt that Isabella's nature was as merciful as it was just, as humane and kindly as it was righteous, as benevolent and mild as it was strict-principled; yet nevertheless, in her reign was established a tribunal conspicuous for merciless, inhuman and deadly severity—the Inquisition. Owing to early impressions, and to having for confessor in her girlhood one of the most relentless of men,—Thomas de Torquemada (afterwards the Inquisitor General of Spain,)—she had acquired a habit of deferring in all spiritual matters to other arbitrament than that of her own pure and sensitive conscience. When, therefore, the introduction of the so-called holy office (blasphemous misuse of terms!) into Spain was proposed, Isabella was gradually won to agree to that which her own excellent judgment and good heart—had they been permitted free exercise—would have revolted from. Ferdinand was readily brought to accede to its institution; but Isabella, without whose sanction nothing could be effected in Castile,—long withheld her consent. Her nature recoiled from putting in force so terrible an engine; which, under the name of all that is most revered, might be made the means of cruellest persecution. But a skilful appeal directed to her pious feelings awakened misgiving that leniency might be a sin; she was led to believe that religion required severity towards apostates and heretics, and that to spare suspected Jews, or infidel Mahommedans, was mistaken mercy. Her acquiescence was obtained; and a Papal bull authorizing the establishment of the Inquisition in Castile was solicited from Rome.

She still hesitated; and kept the execution of the bull suspended for two years; but at length, in 1480, the royal order was issued, and the Court of Inquisitors was appointed. The number of prisoners soon became so great that the space first destined for their reception was wholly inadequate to contain them; various rigorous penalties followed; and sentences of death abounded. In the course of the year 1481, two hundred and ninety-eight persons were burned alive in the city of Seville, two thousand in other parts of Andalusia, and seventeen thousand suffered different penal inflictions. The property of those who were executed was confiscated; and Queen Isabella wrote to the Pope complaining that what she had done on behalf of the Catholic faith, drew upon her the accusation of having done it for the sake of the valuable confiscations which accrued from condemnation. Conscious of her purity of motive, and anxious to secure the power of administering justice according to her own views of what she held to be its due, she wished to make the judgments of the new tribunal independent of any appeal to Rome; and her letter to Sixtus IV. stated this request. But mildness and moderation,—however much desired by Isabella, and recommended by the Pope in his reply,—were not easily made part of a system that soon became irresponsible and potent beyond all limit. The Inquisition was established in Spain; and there it held its fierce sway,—a terror and a scourge of fearfullest might.

On reading the dark story of atrocity committed at a later period of this reign, when the Jews were expelled from Spain, we are filled with indignant regret that a humane nature like Isabella's should have been so desecrated as to have been wrenched into any participation with such monstrous deeds. It is a lamentable instance of a great mind surrendering its judgment to inferior capacities under the influence of ideas of religion. Steadily did Isabella refuse to sign the iniquitous edict for the expulsion of the

Jews, an edict which consigned several hundred thousand persons to beggary, exile, and miserable perishing—until forced into the measure by those who had the spiritual direction of her conscience. The descriptions of the cruel farces enacted, under the name of enquiry into their state of converted faith, against suspected Jews, make Le Sage's account of the fraudulent process carried on against Samuel Simon, the Christianized Jew, by the mock inquisitors, Don Raphael and Ambrose Lamela, in company with Gil Blas, no caricature whatever; while the relation in history of the miseries suffered by the exiled Israelites, stripped of their possessions, and turned forth to wander away and starve by thousands, wrings the heart with grief and abhorrence at the ferocities committed under the plea of serving Heaven's cause. Will men never remember God's reply to Abraham, when he thrust the old man from his tent, exposing him to all the evils of the night, because he worshipped the fire only? Instead of applauding this act of zealous anger on his behalf, God answered:—"I have suffered him these hundred years, although he dishonoured me; and could'st not thou endure him one night?"* We cannot but recall Molière's spirited expostulation:—

"Des intérêts du Ciel pourquoi vous chargez-vous?
Pour punir le coupable, a-t-il besoin de nous?
Laissez-lui, laissez-lui le soin de ses vengeances:
Ne songez qu'au pardon qu'il preserit aux offenees;
Et ne regardez point aux jugements humains,
Quand vous suivez du Ciel les ordres souverains."

[Why take on yourself Heaven's eause to defend?
To punish the eulprit, need He our help append?
Leave to him, leave to him, the eare to avenge:
Remember, that pardon's enjoined as revenge;
And judge not aeeording to Earth's human leaven,
When obeying the orders of sovereign Heaven.]

* The reader is referred to Bishop Jeremy Taylor's sermon on "Liberty of Prophesying," for this beautiful parable-story; and to Leigh Hunt's poetical version of it, under the title of "Abraham and the Fire-worshipper."

A great feature in the political conduct of Isabella and her husband, was the prudence and temper they displayed in their negociations with foreign courts; and the judicious moderation blended with dignified firmness and spirited assertion, which mark all their international and ambassadorial treaties. They possessed that valuable secret in diplomacy—as it is in most human intercourse—of preserving coolness amid perplexing discussion; and maintaining strict right and justice in privilege, while using forbearance of expression.

Their invariable selection, too, of the fittest and worthiest men for appointment to the highest offices in the state, secured to the sovereigns the ablest assistance in ruling their kingdom. The names of two such men as Cardinal Mendoza and Cardinal Ximenes, who successively filled the post of primate of Spain, amply instance Ferdinand and Isabella's appreciation of lofty intellect and commanding powers; with their care to place gifted persons like these in positions which should appropriate the exercise of their endowments to the national behoof.

Isabella's zeal for religion, and thirst for glory, excited in her a desire to expel the Moslemites from their last stronghold in Spain. War was therefore carried into the kingdom of Granada; and she, by her indefatigable exertions, provident forethought, and dauntless courage, was the very soul of the expedition. Ever solicitous for her people's welfare, she neglected nothing that could ensure the personal comforts of her troops, as well as sustain their valour. Her tender care for the sick and wounded soldiers, led to her appointing a number of large tents, known as the "queen's hospitals," to be established for their reception; where the needful attendance and medicines were provided at her own charge. Isabella has the honour—a noble one for her, as queen and woman—of this being the first instance on record of regular camp hospi-

tals. She supported her husband by her cheering views; she encouraged the leaders by frequent letters and bestowal of honours; she visited the camp in person; and set a perpetual example of heroism in spirit and in action. She proved herself an able general; she levied forces, she constructed roads, she supplied stores and provisions, she devised means for meeting expenditure, and—as a last resource, pawned not only the crown jewels, but her own ornaments, to furnish the requisite amount of military cost. When the protracted siege of Baza wore out the spirits of the army, her presence acted like an angelic influence to inspire fresh vigour and determination. She appeared upon the field, mounted on horseback, and clad in complete armour. The suit of mail she wore, is still preserved as a precious memorial in the armoury at Madrid. She superintended the military preparations, and personally inspected every part of the encampment. On one occasion, subsequently, an accident occurred, which might have been attended with fatal consequences; but which was made the source of ultimate and permanent good. By the carelessness of her attendants, a lamp was suffered to remain in such a situation, that it set fire to the hangings of the tent in which the queen was lodged; and the flames, spreading rapidly, threatened a general conflagration. Fortunately, Isabella escaped uninjured, and, to prevent any recurrence of a similar danger, it was resolved to erect a substantial town on the site of the encampment. The work proceeded with such diligence, that in less than three months the task was accomplished. The army were desirous that the new city should bear the name of their well-beloved queen; but Isabella, with her usual modesty and judgment, declined this tribute, and entitled the place *Santa Fé*, in token of the holy faith with which the war had been undertaken by herself and people.

At length, the capital of Granada surrendered; the keys of the

Alhambra were delivered up; and Ferdinand and Isabella took possession of the city,—the grandees kneeling to the queen, and saluting her hand in sign of homage as sovereign of Granada.

While the conquerors moved triumphant towards the scene of their glory, the Moorish King, Abdallah, or Boabdil, took his way from his lost possessions. The unhappy prince drew bridle when he reached a rocky point which commanded a last view of Granada; and unable to bear the sight, burst into tears. His mother, (whom some authorities name Ayxa, others Zoraya; both having been wives to Abdallah's father and predecessor, Muley Abul Hacen,)—of more haughty and inflexible spirit than her son,—is said to have exclaimed bitterly:—"You do well to weep like a woman, for what you could not defend like a man!" The spot is poetically commemorated by the title given to it by the people of the country, "*El ultimo sospiro del Moro*,"—"The last sigh of the Moor."

Mr. Washington Irving's beautiful "Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada," gives the most graphic description of all this brilliant period in Isabella's life. The air of rich-hued romance thrown over the account, together with a certain antique fashion of simplicity in the diction, give it a resemblance to the pages of old Froissart.

The conquest of Granada,—grand as that achievement was,—formed, as it were, but the prelude to a still more glorious event; an event which gilds Isabella's reign with a splendour the most lustrous. To her belongs the especial credit of listening with favour to proposals, which, to most persons who heard them, appeared but the delusions of a visionary. Christopher Columbus had vainly sought from other crowned heads, the necessary patronage and support for the prosecution of his schemes of discovery. His first application to the court of Spain came at an unpropitious season, when the sovereigns were engrossed with the Moorish war;

and were conveyed through an adverse channel,—no other than the queen's confessor, who, at that period, was Fernando de Talavera, a man of narrow views, and averse from any thing like innovation or enterprise. Columbus's warm and steadfast friend,—Juan Perez de Marchena, superior in the convent of La Rabida, where Columbus, when a needy wanderer, had asked bread and shelter for his young son,—had from the first taken strong interest in the great navigator's theories of discovery; and had furnished him with letters of introduction to Talavera, as the best method of obtaining access to Isabella's ear. The confessor's intervention was not more favourable to Columbus's cause, than so lukewarm an advocacy as Talavera's of what he thought mere wild improbable fantasy, was likely to be; and years elapsed in profitless delay. Heart-sick and weary, Columbus prepared to quit Spain, in order to submit his proposals to the court of France. Again, however, his good friend, Juan Perez stepped in, and persuaded Columbus to suspend his resolution, until he himself tried what a personal application would do. Perez had at one time been confessor to Isabella; and possessing the queen's esteem for his many excellent qualities, he went at once to her, obtained an audience, and pleaded Columbus's cause with so much fervour, that he succeeded in exciting the attention and securing the interest of the sovereigns. The prosperous close of the war in Granada afforded additional opportunity for listening to proposals that opened a prospect of such vast and important acquisitions; and Columbus was recalled to state his own views to the Spanish sovereigns. This he did with so much eloquence and skill, that while the imagination of the king was dazzled with ideas of gain and dominion, that of Isabella was fired with the hope of extending the light of Christianity over nations ignorant and heathen. Even then, Ferdinand's calculating spirit would have placed a bar to the fulfilment of the project,

for, upon Columbus's stipulations on his side being announced, the king demurred to them; and as nothing could induce the stout-hearted Genoese to relinquish points that he knew to be his due, the conferences were broken off, and he once more left the Spanish court, to try his fortune elsewhere. The friends he had there, ventured boldly to represent to the queen the risk she ran of beholding some other monarchy avail itself of Columbus's services to secure the glory and advantage of his discoveries; and one of them went so far as to remind Isabella that her present policy was not in accordance with the magnanimous spirit which had hitherto made her the ready patron of great and heroic enterprise. She,—with her usual fine sense,—far from being displeased at this honest eloquence, was moved by it to give Columbus's proposals their due consideration, and to view them in their true light. Refusing to listen longer to the suggestions of cold or timid counsellors, she gave way to the natural impulses of her own noble and generous heart, and declared that she would assume the undertaking for her own crown of Castile; and that she was ready to part with her jewels to defray the cost, should the funds in the treasury be insufficient. Thus spiritedly did this high-minded woman ever behave where a principle or a right course was involved.

No sooner were the conditions settled, and the expedition resolved upon, than Isabella, with her characteristic promptitude and ability, took the requisite measures for forwarding its commencement. Orders were despatched for stores and articles necessary for the voyage; a small fleet of three vessels was appointed to sail from the port of Palos; and, as the expedition was far from popular, a royal ordinance was issued, promising protective privileges to all who should embark in it. On the 3rd August, 1492, the illustrious navigator set sail—with what immortal success, is well known.

To Isabella of Castile is doubtless attributable a share in the glory of Christopher Columbus's grand discovery. Had she not yielded credit to his theories, and partaken in the noble enthusiasm of his views, he might have continued to pine out the remainder of his life in vain solicitations, and fruitless seeking for patronage. The acquisition of a new hemisphere is partly her triumph; and the generous credence which an elevated soul gives to conceptions deemed chimerical by less exalted minds, is wholly her own. Isabella's interest in Columbus and his undertaking was no fickle or transitory sentiment; from the time she first put faith in him, she remained his steadfast friend and protectress to the last. His own words bear testimony to her enlightened benignity, where he says in one of his letters:—"In the midst of the general incredulity, the Almighty infused into the queen, my lady, the spirit of intelligence and energy; and, whilst every one else in his ignorance was expatiating only on the inconvenience and cost, her Highness approved it, on the contrary, and gave it all the support in her power." And one instance, among others, of the gracious consideration she evinced for Columbus, is marked by the circumstance of her taking his two sons, Diego and Fernando, as her own pages, on the death of Prince John, in whose service they had formerly been.

The sudden loss of this prince, in the full bloom of youthful promise, was a blow to his mother's heart from which she never entirely recovered. He died on the 4th of October, 1497, in the twentieth year of his age, not more than six months after his auspicious marriage with the Princess Margaret, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian. Prince John was the darling of the nation, as well as of his parents; for never did royal heir give greater hope of future excellence. Isabella received the news of this beloved son's death with the resignation and fortitude of one who had

schooled her soul to bear the dispensations of her Creator with unmurmuring submission; but though meek and patient of demeanour, her inmost heart felt the wound. This trial was succeeded the very year after, by one no less afflicting: her eldest daughter and namesake, Isabella, who had been married to the Prince of Portugal, died in childbirth; and this second bereavement, so soon following the first, caused her health to sink under the heavy calamity.

The queen's affections received reiterated shocks at this period; and it seemed as if her domestic sorrows were to be heaped in proportion with the abundance of her regal prosperities. She had lost her mother, the dowager-queen; who, during the latter years of her life, had suffered from a mental infirmity that drew forth the tenderest personal care of Isabella; and she had now a fresh misery to endure, which caused her bitter anguish both in maternal and in queenly relation. Her second daughter, Joanna, who had been allied in marriage with the archduke Philip of Flanders, at this time gave unequivocal symptoms of insanity; and as—owing to the deaths of Prince John and the young Queen of Portugal—the succession devolved upon Joanna, Isabella's heart was torn by mingled grief for her hapless daughter, and filled with anxious forebodings for the future welfare of her beloved people. Yet even in the midst of these accumulated sources of sorrow, and notwithstanding the rapidly-declining state of her own health, she still continued to devote the energies of her mind to the interests of her subjects; and up to the period of her death, ceased not to take an active share in the provisions for their protection and benefit. A threatened invasion from France occupied her ardent and unselfish efforts to aid Ferdinand in repelling it; and she resolutely held illness at bay, that her husband might dedicate his undivided attention to the needful military preparations for defence.

The enemy was effectually driven back over the border; and a truce, honourable and advantageous to Spain, was effected. Deprived of her eldest daughter, and only son, by death, and doomed to behold her second daughter, Joanna, a prey to a living mental death, Isabella had to part with her youngest daughter, and behold her removed to a distant land. This princess, known to us in English history as Catharine of Arragon, had been affianced at an early age to Arthur, Prince of Wales; and was subsequently wedded to him. The union lasted but six months; and was by many believed to have been but a nominal marriage. Henry VIII., after his brother's death, espoused the young widow. Isabella added her influence to her husband's, in prevailing upon Catharine to enter into these second nuptials; but she was spared a knowledge of the melancholy catastrophe they ultimately entailed upon her daughter. Her own death preceded the climax of her daughter's sad fate, as depicted by Shakespeare with such noble pathos; yet it is impossible to help recalling the link that associates the affecting words which Shakespeare has placed in Queen Catharine's mouth, with the subject of our narrative, where she says:—

> "They that my trust must grow to, live not here:
> They are, as all my other comforts, far hence,
> In mine own country, lords."

We can hardly forbear fancying that her thoughts here wander back to that fond, devoted parent, that heroic-hearted mother, whose dearest care was for her children.

Bravely as Isabella had borne her multiplied afflictions, their poignancy destroyed her. Repeated warnings of decay were accepted with pious firmness, and she availed herself of their indication to execute her will, while her faculties retained their clearness. This renowned document is instinct with her characteristic virtue and high principle; and remains a monument of her grand mind and heart—showing how perfectly the gentlest tenderness

co-exists with the strongest mental sense. The passages where she makes mention of her husband, in this solemnly-beautiful testament, are characteristic in the extreme. She directs that her remains may be transported to Granada, to the Franciscan monastery of Santa Isabella in the Alhambra, and there deposited in a low and humble tomb, without other memorial than a plain inscription on it. "But," she adds, "should the king my lord prefer a sepulchre in some other place, then my will is that my body be there transported, and laid by his side; that the union we have enjoyed in this world, and, through the mercy of God, may hope again for our souls in heaven, may be represented by our bodies in the earth." And she concludes, with a wifely deference exquisitely blended with the fervour of affectionate monition—such as had made her his better angel through life, and now rendered her his guardian spirit in death:—"I beseech the king my lord that he will accept all my jewels, or such as he may select, so that, seeing them, he may be reminded of the singular love I always bore him while living, and that I am now waiting for him in a better world; by which remembrance he may be encouraged to live more justly and holily in this."

A point in this will is worthy of notice, as a hint that might be judiciously followed by the generality, who are prone to absurd expenditure in a matter that this great queen held to be unworthy of profuse cost. She commanded that her funeral obsequies should be performed in the plainest and most unostentatious manner, and that the sum saved by this economy should be distributed in alms among the poor.

She expired on the 26th of November, 1504, in the fifty-fourth year of her age, and thirtieth of her reign. Spain lost its noblest monarch; her husband and family their best friend; her subjects their benignest protector.

Mr. Prescott, in his admirable "History of Ferdinand and Isabella," has drawn a parallel between Elizabeth of England and Isabella of Castile, showing with masterly discrimination the points of circumstantial resemblance, and of moral dissimilarity, which existed between the two women-monarchs. In conclusion, he says: "Both pined amidst their royal state, a prey to incurable despondency, rather than to any marked bodily distemper. In Elizabeth it sprang from wounded vanity, a sullen conviction that she had outlived the admiration on which she had so long fed—and even the solace of friendship and the attachment of her subjects. Nor did she seek consolation, where alone it was to be found, in that sad hour. Isabella, on the other hand, sunk under a too acute sensibility to the sufferings of others. But, amidst the gloom which gathered around her, she looked with the eye of faith to the brighter prospects which unfolded of the future; and, when she resigned her last breath, it was amidst the tears and universal lamentations of her people."

A very beautiful trait in the character of Isabella, is her large humanity. This is perhaps one of the greatest—while it is, alas! one of the rarest attributes in sovereign rulers. They are generally so intent upon the aggrandizement of their people, that they are apt to omit giving sufficient consideration to more immediately pertinent concerns. The social wants and grievances of subjects are less usually thought for, than their national advantages and state position. But Isabella had a woman's solicitude for those who were committed to her queenly guardianship. Not only was her vigilance sleepless on behalf of her own Castilian people, but her interest for those indirectly within the scope of her dominion, was hardly less animated. The commiseration she expressed for the African slaves imported into Seville—with her repeated interferences to procure them more equal protection from the laws, as well

as such social indulgences as might mitigate the hardships of their lot—affords proof of this. And the compassionate sympathy she evinced for the Indian captives; desiring lenient measures to be taken for their conversion; indignantly protesting against having them treated with harshness; causing missionaries to be instructed in the language of the natives, so that persuasion and argument might win the unoffending islanders, instead of consigning them to the horrors of slavery; and finally, the fact of her inserting an especial clause in the codicil to her last testament, wherein she earnestly enjoins her successors to quicken the good work of converting and civilizing the poor Indians, to treat them with the greatest gentleness, and redress any wrongs they may have suffered in their persons or property—eloquently bespeak her humane and enlightened spirit. The way in which she obtained commutation of the most rigorous portion of the sentence passed upon an assassin who attempted Ferdinand's life, bears evidence of her merciful disposition; and the endeavours she made to lessen the ferocity attending the national sport of bullfights, at the same time exhibiting due regard for popular predilection, proclaim her united wisdom and benevolence.

Besides her passionate attachment to her mother, husband, and children, her friendships were warm and lasting. In the arms of her earliest and dearest friend, Beatrice, Marchioness of Moya, who was seldom separated from her royal mistress during life, Isabella yielded her last breath; and her faithful adherent, Peter Martyr, in a letter written on the very day of the queen's death, says, with mournful fervour:—"My hand falls powerless by my side for very sorrow. The world has lost its noblest ornament; a loss to be deplored not only by Spain, which she has so long carried forward in the career of glory, but by every nation in Christendom; for she was the mirror of every virtue, the shield of the innocent, and

an avenging sword to the wicked. I know none of her sex, in ancient or modern times, who in my judgment is at all worthy to be named with this incomparable woman." Such a testimony from one who was in close and intimate opportunity of witnessing her course of conduct for a long period of years, comes with affecting weight.

Bayard, the chevalier "Sans peur et sans reproche," in his chivalrous admiration of her achievement in recovering the kingdom of Granada from Moorish sway by force of arms, is an evidence of her martial repute. In adverting to her death—after calling her "one of the most triumphant and glorious ladies that for three thousand years hath dwelt upon this earth"—he says, in the quaint fashion of an old chronicler, with his antique French diction, and poetic colouring:—

"Je veux bien asseurer aux lecteurs de ceste présente hystoire, que sa vie a esté telle qu'elle a bien mérité couronne de laurier après sa mort."

["I can assure the readers of this my present history, her life hath been such, that she hath well merited a crown of laurel after death."]

Her patronage of letters, her encouragement of intellectual culture among the ladies of her court, her admirable system of education for the prince, her son, as heir-apparent to the throne, her engagement of the ablest preceptors for the infantas, her daughters, her inducements to men of learning to settle in Spain, her sagacious discernment of talent, and her taste for collecting books, are so many exemplifications of her mental perspicacity; while the introduction of the art of printing into Spain, at the very outset of her accession, most opportunely tended to promote her enlightened efforts. Isabella's reign formed a literary epoch in her country.

She was singularly free from prejudice, and had none of the narrow dislike of foreign or rival excellence common to inferior

natures; yet her fine understanding allowed full weight to national feeling, popular preference, and public opinion. She was so much in advance of her age, that the manner in which she made public opinion a main guide of her actions, while preserving the integrity of her own faith and principle, anticipated the wisdom with which sovereign power is now controuled by this mighty element. Isabella possessed foresight, tolerance, prudence, and benevolence; and wherever those virtues failed to operate actively, it was because they were restrained by an influence to which she yielded her own will. Meek as she was gifted, her modest self-mistrust and pious humility rendered her docile to remonstrance from her spiritual directors; and advantage was taken of her reverence for religion to obtain her acquiescence in deeds of bigotry and persecution performed in its sacred name, which were the only blots on her otherwise unblemished career.

Her reign exists a period of glory and advancement to Spain; her life was a beneficent influence and lasting blessing to her subjects; and her memory will be cherished, in immortal honour, by her native country. Isabella of Castile was the model of a virtuous woman, and arch-admirable queen.

LADY JANE GREY.

Lady Jane Grey affords an illustrious instance of youthful erudition in a lady, high-born, beautiful, and modest. She was of royal descent, yet meek and unassuming; learned, yet simple. She had neither vanity, pride, nor ambition; although her charms of person, her acquirements, and her exalted rank, might, in a young lady of weaker mind, have generated all three.

Unfortunately, her family connections were not equally free from these defects: for they were vain of Lady Jane's beauty, and took advantage of her gentleness to treat her with severity, and ultimately with cruelty: they were proud of her endowments, yet behaved as if she had neither sense, feeling, nor volition; and they made her birth and position a source of their selfish ambition, sacrificing her to it without remorse, or even the common natural affection of kindred.

Lady Jane Grey was born in 1537, at Broadgate, her father's seat in Leicestershire. She was of the blood-royal of England, being great grand-daughter to Henry VII.; whose daughter, Mary, married, first, Louis XII. of France, and secondly, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, by whom she had a daughter, the lady Frances Brandon, married to Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset—Lady Jane Grey's father.

That Charles Brandon was the gallant Gentleman, whose romantic fortune is like a tale of chivalry. In his boyish days he was a playmate of the Prince Henry, afterwards Henry VIII.; and Princess Mary, afterwards Queen of France. The royal brother and sister felt a strong affection for the handsome, accomplished youth,—an affection which subsequently took the form of friendship in "bluff King Hal," and love in the beautiful widow of Louis XII., who married the object of her early preference, when released from the tie of a State alliance. Charles Brandon received with the rapturous eagerness of a lover the happiness his mistress bestowed, by wedding her privately and immediately; but with the true spirit of noble feeling, he marked his delicate sense of the honour she had conferred, by appearing at a tournament given in celebration of their public nuptials, on a saddle-cloth, made half of frize and half of cloth of gold, bearing a motto on each half:—

"Cloth of frize, be not too bold,
Though thou art match'd with cloth of gold."

And,—

"Cloth of gold, do not despise
Though thou art match'd with cloth of frize."

This piece of fine taste in her maternal grandfather, is like the germ of that mingled humility and dignity which Lady Jane Grey possessed in so remarkable a degree—and which is,in fact, moral dignity. That nobility of soul, which, while it perceives its own capacity for high and refined excellence, is content to advance no claims, enabled Lady Jane Grey not only to bear mildly the austerities of her girlhood, but to endure with fortitude and resignation the calamities that beset her youth, and brought her innocent life to a premature close. The strict, and even rigid authority which it was then the custom for parents to exercise towards their children; the excess of respectful distance observed by the latter

towards them, can alone account for the rigorous treatment Lady Jane Grey experienced from her father and mother in childhood; while she, with her native sweetness of disposition, made it but an extra motive for reaping delight and solace from study, for which she showed an extraordinary capacity at an early age.

Her parents, proud of her talents, and anxious that they should obtain due cultivation, engaged as her preceptor, John Aylmer, afterwards Bishop of London. She also received instruction from the erudite Roger Ascham; and she seems to have inspired both these learned men with the fondest partiality for their fair young pupil. Many learned divines entertained great admiration for her: and expressed themselves in terms so flattering on her behalf, that, had she been less devoid of self-sufficiency, it might have proved injurious. Between herself and Ascham, indeed, there existed an affectionate intimacy of intercourse not often to be found between a girl of her years and a man of his. She confided to him her home griefs and her home resources, with a candour touchingly artless. In reply to his enquiry, how it was that at her age, she had attained such proficiency in languages, and acquired such a habit of study, she wrote him a letter, wherein she says:—"I will tell you a truth, which, perchance, you will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits which ever God gave me is, that he sent me such sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a teacher. For, when I am in presence either of my father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go; eat, drink, be merry, or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it, as it were, in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly, as God made the world. Or else—I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, nay, prevented sometimes, with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways, which I will not name, for the honour which I bear my parents—I am so disordered, that I think myself

in hell, till the moment comes that I must go to Mr. Aylmer; who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, and with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing while I am with him, but when I am called from him I fall a weeping; because whatever else I do but learning, is full of grief, fear, and trouble. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more enjoyment, that, in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles unto me."

She drew the truest philosophy from her reading; for she taught herself the happy wisdom of turning evils into sources of good; and learned the divine secret, how to suck the honey of content, instead of the gall of discontent, from life's trials. That she spoke nothing but truths, when she said, that compared with the pleasure and enjoyment she derived from her book, all other pleasures were trifling to her, we find from an interesting anecdote related by Aseham to a friend of his. On one occasion, paying a visit to the Marquis of Dorset, at Broadgate, he found all the family out in the park on a hunting excursion, with the exception of Lady Jane, whom he discovered in her own apartment, alone, engaged in reading Plato in the original Greek. She understood that language perfectly; although then not fifteen years of age. She spoke and wrote Greek, Latin, Italian, and French, with fluency and correctness; and was acquainted with Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic.

Such classical knowledge in a young lady of high rank, was by no means a singular instance at that period; for the Duchess of Somerset's three daughters, Lady Jane, Lady Margaret, and Lady Mary Seymour were distinguished by similar attainments, and were considered to be the most learned and accomplished ladies in Europe, with the exception of the Princess Mary, (afterwards Queen Mary I.) and the Lady Jane Grey. Queen Elizabeth, also, was versed

in the classics, so that although Lady Jane Grey ranked as one of the first lady-students of the time, she stood not alone in her pre-eminence. Lady Jane, in a manner, partook of the same education with her royal cousins; Ascham having been tutor to the Princess Elizabeth, and Latin secretary to Edward VI. In the princess Mary's private account-book, where she kept a list of her jewels, there is an entry bearing evidence of the friendly intercourse which then existed between the young kinswomen; while it involves impressive points of subsequent association.—Mary's hand wrote this entry; the same hand that afterwards signed Jane's death warrant. The entry registers a gift for Lady Jane Grey's *throat:*—that fair throat which was ordered to be severed by the headsman. "One gold necklace, set with pearls,—given to my cousin Jane Grey." We seem to see in place of those words:—"A red necklace, red with blood,—given to my cousin Jane Grey." The origin of ill-feeling on the part of Mary towards one who subsequently became her rival claimant to the English throne, may be traced to difference of religious opinion. The Princess Mary was a staunch Catholic; Lady Jane Grey was equally devoted to Protestant principles, being firmly and strongly attached to them. Mary adhered to her creed, none the less scrupulously from its being almost proscribed. There was a kind of heroism in abiding by a ritual that incurred risk of persecution in its performance; and, moreover, her character was obstinate, and her faith zealous to bigotry. Lady Jane, from her intimacy with Church of England prelates, and her own mental powers, was warm in her advocacy for the tenets she professed. An incident recorded of the two cousins, bears out the view of the probable source of their mutual variance. During the summer of 1552, the Princess Mary received Lady Jane Grey as her guest at New Hall. The mass, and other rites of her persuasion, were constantly performed in Mary's

domestic household, notwithstanding the prohibition that existed against their celebration. It chanced that Lady Wharton (one of the Princess Mary's ladies) passing through the chapel at New Hall, in company with Lady Jane Grey, at a time when service was not going on, made a genuflexion to the host, which was in the sanctuary on the altar. Lady Jane asked "if the Lady Mary were in the chapel?" Lady Wharton said, "No."

"Why then, do you courtesy?" asked Lady Jane Grey.

"I courtesy to him that made me;" replied Lady Wharton.

"Nay," said Lady Jane Grey, "but did not the baker make him?"

This flippant retort, alluding to the consecrated wafer in a mode that could not but be deeply offensive to the religious belief of the person she addressed, was perhaps pardonable in a young girl, hot in controverted doctrinal points; but it would have been well for her, and more in accordance with the beautiful meekness and fine understanding which characterized Lady Jane Grey on other occasions than this, had her reply been actuated by the spirit of Sir Thomas Browne's noble sentence:—"At the sight of a cross or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought of my Saviour. I could never hear the Ave Maria bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all—that is in silence and dumb contempt."

Unfortunately, Lady Jane's uttered "contempt" was reported to her cousin Mary; who, it is certain, never after that time loved Lady Jane Grey as she had done before. Another circumstance equally confirms the idea of what formed the basis of the two cousins' disagreement. The princess had presented Lady Jane with a rich dress; and it is more than probable that there were plenty of court whisperers to repeat the terms in which Lady Jane

remarked upon the sinfulness of wearing this gift from "one who left God's word."

But the Protestant ardour which prompted Lady Jane Grey to make these indiscreet animadversions upon her cousin Mary's form of belief, and which gave such umbrage to the person who was their object, formed the main ground of her cousin Edward VI.'s approval. The young king, who was of the same age as herself, had always entertained a high and admiring esteem for Lady Jane Grey. The progress she made in her studies won his respect and regard; while her elegant person and amiable disposition had inspired him with great affection for her. The opportunities he had enjoyed of becoming acquainted with the tenor of her religious principles, as well as with the fervour and strength of her adherence to them, caused him to listen with greater complacency to those suggestions for setting aside his sister's claims to the crown in favour of his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, and appointing her his successor, than he might probably otherwise have done.

The chief instigator of this proposal was the Duke of Northumberland, a crafty and intriguing nobleman, who contrived to possess himself of the young king's ear, during the lingering malady which seized Edward VI.; and having previously effected an alliance which rendered the interests of Lady Jane Grey uniform with those of his own family, he neglected no argument which might induce the king to listen to his plan for placing her on the throne. Northumberland had caused the Marquis of Dorset to be created Duke of Suffolk; and then he prevailed with him to bestow his daughter, Lady Jane Grey, in marriage upon Lord Guilford Dudley, Northumberland's fourth son. The languishing state of the young king's health, made him a facile prey to the designing courtier; whose plausible representations, joined to his own predilection for Lady Jane Grey, and his anxiety to secure a Protestant

successor, rendered it little difficult to obtain from Edward VI. a deed in her favour.

The king's sudden death followed almost immediately upon the execution of this document; and Northumberland, knowing that the concerted change in the succession, would raise violent opposition, carefully concealed the destination of the crown signed by Edward. He kept the royal demise a secret as long as he could, with a view of getting the two sister princesses into his power; for he had persuaded the council to write letters, desiring the presence of Mary and Elizabeth at court, on the plea that the king's precarious state of health demanded the aid of their advice, and the comfort of their company. But the intelligence of their brother's death having actually taken place, reached the princesses in time to warn them of the snare that was tendered them; and they kept aloof from London. Mary, upon receiving these tidings, wrote letters to the nobility and chief gentry in every county of England, summoning them to assist her in the defence of her rights; and Northumberland, perceiving that farther dissimulation would be useless, proceeded to carry out his deep-laid schemes.

He repaired to Sion House, where Lady Jane Grey had resided since her marriage with his son; and, accompanied by the Duke of Suffolk and a train of nobles, he approached her with all the respect paid to royalty, and addressed her as his sovereign. He informed her that she was now Queen of England, in virtue of her cousin Edward VI.'s decree in her favour. Lady Jane, who was wholly ignorant of the intrigues of her father-in-law, and who herself was free from ambition, heard this announcement with little short of dismay. Her studious habits, her love of intellectual pleasures, her preference for quiet and retirement, rendered her peculiarly averse from grandeur and regal state. In addition to her native delight in the pursuit of learning, her heart was now

filled with a still tenderer interest—love for her young husband, who was worthy of her affection. But not only did her own predilections cause her to feel disinclined for the onerous burthen of a crown; her sense of justice taught her that the claims of others, better entitled, were infringed by this assertion of her own. She refused the royal dignity they offered; denied her right to the throne; urged the preferable titles of her cousins, the princess Mary and princess Elizabeth; expressed her dread of the results which must attend an enterprise so perilous and so criminal as an attempt to make her queen in their stead; and entreated that she might be suffered to remain in the private station in which she had been born. Northumberland, not to be moved from his purpose, engaged her father to second him in his remonstrances; and the two ambitious dukes joined in importunity with her to yield to their wishes. The innocent victim of their fatal greed, withstood their cruel and selfish pleading, until Lord Guilford Dudley, the husband she so fondly loved, added the weight of his persuasions to those of her parents, and father-in-law; and then, no longer able to resist the mingled instancy of authority and affection, she yielded—though with shuddering reluctance, and painfullest foreboding. Her own subsequent account of this scene, declares its distressing nature. In a letter, addressed to Queen Mary I. from the Tower, Lady Jane Grey describes her consternation when Northumberland first announced the news, doing her homage as queen; her agony of mind at the importunities of her relations; and her final falling to the ground in a swoon, from present agitation, and future ill-presage.

She now became a passive instrument in the hands of the unscrupulous Duke of Northumberland; who immediately conveyed her to London, where she was proclaimed queen; but without one applauding voice. The people heard the proclamation with silence

and concern; the preachers themselves (who were naturally eager to advocate the claims of a known firm Protestant as successor to the throne) employing their eloquence in vain to convince their auditors of the justice of Lady Jane's title. Respect for the royal line, and indignation against the factious and aspiring duke, were stronger even in the breasts of Protestants than the dread of popery. Reverence for right is a religion with the English people.

According to established custom, on the accession of a sovereign, the Tower of London became the place of royal residence during the first days of reign; and Lady Jane Grey, as the new queen, was conducted thither by her father-in-law.

Every thing tends to confirm the extreme unwillingness with which Lady Jane shared in any of the proceedings of her relatives to assume regal state on her behalf. She took no step of her own accord; and even resisted their attempts to make her elevation a pretext for advancing their own. She went so far as to incur the resentment of her husband, by opposing plans for his adoption of power, inconsistent with the limits appointed for the consort of a queen-regnant in England. This is demonstrated by her own description of an incident that occurred. On her being conveyed to the Tower, as queen, the Marquis of Winchester—unsent for—brought her the crown to try on her head, to see how it would fit her; and when she scrupled to put it on, the Marquis said that she need not do so, for he would have another made to crown her husband withal. To this hinted idea of coronation for her husband, Lady Jane strenuously objected; and she consequently drew upon herself coarse and violent behaviour from both him and his mother, the Duchess of Northumberland. They seem actually to have resorted to personal ill-usage; for she says, with indignant emphasis, "I was *maltreated* by my husband and his mother."

Thus supervened the first of those disastrous results, which the

hapless Lady Jane foresaw must accrue from her unjust accession to queenly station. Her young husband, who, when they together enjoyed their happy privacy, was united to her by loving confidence—now that the seeds of ambition had been made to spring up in his mind by this ripened project of his father, was led to treat her with harshness and unkindness.

In all ways, Lady Jane was the unoffending sufferer from the misdeeds of others. She was made the means of advancing their selfish ends; and when blame or danger ensued in consequence of their acts, she was made the scapegoat and sacrifice to endure the penalty for them.

The princess Mary lost no time in asserting her claims, and striving to make them good. She succeeded in levying a large force. The people declared for her, when she assured them that she had no intention of altering the laws of Edward VI., as regarded religion; and the nobility and gentry supported her cause by daily reinforcements.

Northumberland, at the head of the troops, marched to resist Mary's army; but he not only sustained defeat—he abandoned the stake he had so shamelessly played for, by as shameful a withdrawal, and forsook Lady Jane's cause with as little compunction as he had forced her into becoming its centre. He, her unworthy father-in-law, basely betrayed the allegiance he had compelled Queen Jane to accept, by being the first man to throw up his cap in Cambridge market-place, and cry, "God save Queen Mary!"

The Duke of Suffolk, who commanded in the Tower, was no truer to the unhappy daughter, whom he had constrained to come there as queen; for, finding the struggle hopeless, he threw open the gates of the fortress, and beheld Lady Jane arrested and lodged in the prison rooms of the very place where she had nominally reigned for nine days.

No sympathy for the fate of his child, however, seems to have touched the father's heart so keenly as anxiety for his own. He was himself detained a prisoner in the Tower; and this circumstance occupied both his wife and himself so entirely as to leave no room for thought of their daughter's peril—a peril, which they themselves had been so instrumental in bringing upon her. The Duchess of Suffolk, directly her husband was imprisoned, hastened to throw herself at Queen Mary's feet; and left no plea unurged that might effect his liberation. She represented that the Duke was in ill health, (although there is no evidence to prove that this was the case,) and that he would die if confined within the walls of the Tower. Mary was moved by her lamentations and entreaties. She granted Suffolk's liberation; and three days' imprisonment was all the penalty he suffered for his conspiring with Northumberland to compel Lady Jane Grey's acceptance of the crown. The heartlessness of the father, is only equalled by that of the mother. There is no record of one word having been uttered by the Duchess Frances in intercession for her unfortunate daughter; who now lay a captive from having pursued that very course, which her mother had been one of the most active agents in urging her to adopt. The Duchess had promoted her marriage with Northumberland's son; she had used her maternal influence on the momentous occasion at Sion House; and she had borne her train as queen, during her brief pageant of royalty. A more consistent instance of parental barbarity towards a child so dutiful and gentle as Lady Jane Grey, than she experienced, can hardly be cited. They coerced her in childhood, they sacrificed her in youth, with a want of common natural feeling almost incredible.

The Duke of Northumberland was brought to trial, condemned, and beheaded for high treason; and sentence was pronounced against Lady Jane Grey, and Lord Guilford Dudley, although

they were respited on account of their youth, neither of them having attained the age of seventeen. It is related, that the same time-serving lord-treasurer, the Marquis of Winchester, who brought Lady Jane the crown, unbidden, in the period of her ascendancy, —when Mary's coronation was preparing, came to the gentle prisoner in the Tower, and told her that several valuable jewels were missing from the state crown, and that she was accountable for them. On this pretence, all the money and jewels of Lady Jane and her husband were confiscated.

Mary had no sooner ascended the throne, than she forfeited her pledged word to the people, by proceeding to manifest her partiality for the Catholic cause. As Fuller pithily says:—"Queen Mary got the crown by *Our Father*, and held it by *Paternoster*. The violent party-spirit that raged at this period in the metropolis is described by Mr. Edward Underhill, a Worcestershire gentleman; who, on account of his flaming Calvinism was called the "Hot Gospeller." He had penned a satirical ballad against "Papists;" and for this squib was summoned before the council in authority, and condemned to imprisonment. A child was born to him while he was in the Tower, which chanced to be during the period of Lady Jane's brief royalty; and it is a significant circumstance that she was about to have stood godmother to the "Hot Gospeller's" baby, when her reign ceased.

Mary's favour to the Romish church was more and more openly displayed; until, at length, her proposed union with Philip of Spain becoming known, it raised a hope in the opposite faction that popular party-feeling would be sufficiently strong against the intended match, to warrant their taking up arms again. The week after the marriage articles became public, three insurrections broke out in different parts of England. One of these was actually headed by the Duke of Suffolk, with the express view of Lady Jane

Grey's restoration to that position she had so shunned, and which had already proved so calamitous to her. So infatuated was this self-engrossed father, that no warning could deter him from his prone pursuit of the regal phantom he clutched at. He was as mean in duplicity: as mad and selfish in ambition: for he had so completely deceived Queen Mary, by affected approval of the proposed Spanish marriage, that she thought of employing him to quell Wyatt's revolt in Kent; and sending for him to Sion house, found he had decamped to head his own insurrection in the midland counties. His brothers, Lord Thomas and Lord John Grey, were with him; and a strong party of horse they had raised. They took their way to Leicestershire; proclaiming Lady Jane Grey Queen, in every town through which they passed. She, in whose name such rash deeds were performed, was still a prisoner in the Tower, lying under suspended sentence of death, and each fresh delinquency on their part acted to her prejudice. She, with her high endowments, was made a mere puppet in their hands; she, with her meek spirit, was made a plea for their reckless outrages. She was at the mercy of their ill-judgment and incapacity; and bore the imputation of their guilt.

The several rebellions were speedily crushed. Wyatt lost his head; and Suffolk was condemned. The Duke was once more sent to the Tower; and Queen Mary was pressed on all sides to consent to the execution of his hapless daughter and her husband. The fatal fact of her re-proclamation by her father, and uncles, was vehemently urged. Poinet, bishop of Winchester, affirms that those lords of the council who had been most instrumental at the death of Edward VI., in thrusting royalty upon Lady Jane, were now the sorest forcers of men, yea became earnest councillors for that innocent lady's death. He plainly indicates these lords to be the Earl of Pembroke and the Marquis of Winchester,—no other than

the same vile trimmer who first delivered the crown to Lady Jane; then virtually accused her of purloining the crown jewels; and lastly endeavoured to crown her with martyrdom.

Mary was prevailed upon to sign the death-warrant of her kinswoman; and the decree which had been suspended, was put into execution against Lady Jane and Lord Guilford Dudley.

Fuller, in his "Life of Lady Jane Grey," hints an awful additional point in this tragedy. He says:—"Some report her to have been with child when she was beheaded (cruelty to cut down the tree with blossoms on it), and that which hath saved the life of many women, hastened her death; but God only knows the truth hereof."

The meek victim, when the order was brought to the Tower, declared that she was by no means unprepared for its advent. She had for some time expected it; and had endeavoured to fortify her spirit to meet her fate with resignation. She had had frequent conferences with Dr. Feckenham, the queen's chaplain, and had always steadily defended her religious opinions, in a manner to gain his friendly regard, even while regretting that he could not succeed in converting her from them. She had written a letter to her sister in Greek, accompanied by a copy of the Bible in the same language, exhorting her to maintain, through all fortunes, a similarly steadfast adherence to principle. It was Dr. Feckenham who was now sent to Lady Jane, to prepare her for speedy death, and to exert every means in his power to change her faith. She declined discussion on the present occasion, being anxious to be spared dispute on their differing creeds; and pleaded that her time was too short for controversy. The confessor hastened to Queen Mary and represented that it could be scarcely hoped Lady Jane would die a Catholic, if she were hurried to the block without sufficient time for conviction. The queen granted a respite of

three days; and Dr. Feckenham returned to the Tower with the tidings of delay. Lady Jane smiled mournfully on her eager friend, and told him that he had misconceived her meaning: it was not that she wished her doom deferred, but that she was desirous of avoiding religious argument. The gentle saint added, that "she was prepared to receive patiently her death in any manner it might please the queen to appoint. True it was, her flesh shuddered, as was natural to frail mortality; but her spirit would spring rejoicingly into the eternal light, when she hoped the mercy of God would receive it." The record of this devoutly resigned speech is preserved by Feckenham; who, though he failed to turn Lady Jane from the Protestant faith, felt interest for her youth and virtue, while inspiring her with gratitude for his kindness and friendship. In the course of the three days that elapsed between the signing of the death-warrant, and the period of her execution, Lady Jane learned the condemnation of her father; who during this interval was brought to the Tower. His victim wrote him a letter, which contains poignant reproach in the very serenity of its submission. This is a portion of it:—

"Father.—Although it has pleased God to hasten my death by you, by whom my life should rather have been lengthened, yet I can so patiently take it, that I yield God more hearty thanks for shortening my woeful days, than if all the world had been given into my possession, with life lengthened at my own will: and, albeit, I am very well assured of your sorrow, both in bewailing your own woe, and especially, as I am informed, my woeful state; yet, my dear father, herein I may account myself blessed, that, washing my hands in innocency, my guiltless blood may cry before the Lord, Mercy to the innocent. And yet, though I must needs acknowledge that, being constrained, and, as you know well enough, continually assailed, yet in taking upon me, I seemed to

consent, and therein grievously offended against the queen and her laws: yet do I assuredly trust that this my offence towards God is so much the less, in that being in so royal a state as I was, my enforced honour never mingled with my innocent heart." * * * "And thus, good father, I have opened unto you the state wherein I presently stand—my death at hand.

"Although perhaps it may seem woeful, yet there is nothing which can to me be more welcome, than from this vale of misery to aspire to that heavenly throne of all joy and pleasure with Christ my Saviour, in whose steadfast faith (if it may be lawful for the daughter so to write to the father) the Lord that hath hitherto strengthened you, so continue to keep you, that at the last we may meet in heaven, with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"I am,

"Your obedient daughter till death,

"JANE DUDLEY."

During her imprisonment Lady Jane composed several prayers, suggested by her distressful circumstances, and showing with what pious sedateness she sustained them; while her mind was so calm and unshaken by the near approach of death, that she corrected these manuscript prayers the night before she suffered.

It had been intended that Lady Jane and Lord Guilford Dudley should be executed on the same scaffold on Tower Hill; but the council dreading the impression which the sight of this unfortunate young couple, in their beauty, innocence, and suffering, would produce upon the people, gave orders that Lady Jane should be beheaded within the verge of the Tower.

She would not consent to take leave of her husband on the day of their execution; sending him word, that the tenderness of parting might unbend their minds from that firmness with which it behoved them to meet their approaching fate. "Our separation,"

she added, "will be but for a moment; we shall soon rejoin each other in a scene where our affections will be for ever united, and where death, disappointment, and misfortune, can no longer disturb our felicity." She beheld Lord Guilford led to execution without discovering any sign of weakness; but, with a woman's true sentiment—combining deepest feeling with outward control, and prompting fond recognition in the midst of mutual courage for both their sakes—she gave him a token of remembrance from the window, as he passed beneath. She even met his headless body with calmness, as she herself went to execution; strengthened by the account she had received of his magnanimity in meeting death. At the sight, she exclaimed, "Oh! Guilford, Guilford! the fate you have tasted, and which I shall soon taste, is not so bitter as to make me tremble; it is nothing to the feast that you and I shall partake of this day in heaven!"

As he conducted her to the scaffold, the Constable of the Tower requested her to bestow upon him some trifle which he might keep as a memorial of her. She gave him her table-book, in which she had just written three sentences; one in Greek, another in Latin, and a third in English. Their purport was, that although human justice was against her husband's body, divine mercy would be favourable to his soul: that if her fault deserved punishment, her youth and inexperience might plead her excuse; and that God and posterity, she trusted, would show her favour.

Her closing speech, addressed to those who stood around her on the scaffold, was marked by her characteristic meekness and composure. She took all blame upon herself; and made no complaint of the severity used towards her. She said that her fault was not so much in assuming the crown, as in not having refused it with sufficient constancy: that she willingly received death as atonement to the laws, which she had been led to violate from filial

duty, and through ignorance: that she deserved this punishment, for having allowed herself (though reluctantly) to be made the instrument of the ambition of others; and that she hoped the story of her life might at least be useful as proving that innocence does not excuse errors which tend in any way to public crimes. "My offence against the Queen," she said, "was none of my seeking, but by council of others. I knew little of the law, and nothing of the titles of the crown:—from all guilty intentions I do wash my hands in innocency before God and you!—Assist me with your prayers!" Having pronounced these words, she bade her women assist to bare her throat; and then ejaculating in a clear voice:—"Lord! into thy hands I commend my spirit!" she laid her head upon the block, and with a steady and serene countenance, submitted to the stroke of the executioner.

Lady Jane Grey perished in the early flower of her age, with a piety and fortitude the most exemplary. Her reading had invigorated her mind, and strengthened her moral feeling. It instilled the wisdom of seeking from intellectual pleasures a resource against personal hardships; and inspired the courage to face early death undismayed. There was only one thing which it failed to give her,—and that was the power to abide by a resolution formed on the conviction of simple right. In a girl of her tender years, it is perhaps almost too much to expect that she should have continued to withstand the combined dictates and entreaties of her assembled family, seconded by those of a beloved husband: but Lady Jane could be firm on points where she held it virtuous to be steadfast; and she should have been consistently determined, in a case where conscience told her that her first impulse was an honest one. Although she asserted in the course of her dying declaration that she "knew nothing of the titles of the crown," it is evident, from her pleading the preferable claims of her cousins, the two princesses, on the memorable occasion at Sion House, that she

knew sufficiently of the titular degrees in royal succession to be aware that she had not so valid a birth-right as either Mary or Elizabeth. It is true that there were not wanting sophistical objections against their claims, and various attempted impeachments of their legitimate title to reign: and moreover, her cousin Edward's testamentary decree in her favour had doubtless much weight. But still, her own instinct told her that the attempt to raise her to the throne was wrong; and she should have maintained the refusal to participate in it, which her pure heart and judgment prompted her to make.

After all—it is but one kind of admiring tribute to this gifted young creature, when we thus point out the single approach to blemish in the otherwise speckless character of Lady Jane Grey. Her name will always be dear to English hearts;—for although her fate is a stain in English annals, her womanly gentleness and modesty, her rare excellence in learning, her holy meekness and firm piety, are all so many sources of legitimate pride to her countrymen and countrywomen.

Lady Jane Grey forms an ideal of youth, beauty, worth and accomplishment, that gives to the old, when they think of her, the sense of possessing an ever-living daughter in immortal bloom of promise; and to the young, a feeling of affectionate esteem, as towards an honoured and beloved sister, of whom Death itself cannot deprive them.

Fuller, in his "Holy State," epitomizes Lady Jane Grey's description in these words:—"She had the innocency of childhood, the beauty of youth, the solidity of middle, the gravity of old age, and all at eighteen: the birth of a princess, the learning of a clerk, the life of a saint, yet the death of a malefactor, for her parents' offences." He, in his own original manner adds:—"Let all great ladies who bear her name, imitate her virtues, to whom I wish her inward holiness, but far more outward happiness."

POCAHONTAS.

The heart of every woman is a romance, and its master-chord is Love. Of all the passions, it is that which exercises the strongest controul over female character; the fruitful parent of a thousand virtues, and a thousand crimes, which, though oft ascribed to other sources, have, in reality, their origin from it alone. Its purity and ennobling strength are beautifully exemplified in the history of the Indian Princess Pocahontas, in whose guileless and untutored heart a passion for one of the most chivalrous adventurers of America's early history, has rendered her the heroine of one of the most simple and touching stories of its olden time.

The maiden, according to all the traditions that have been received of her, presented a perfect model of Indian beauty, at its most attractive period, when the young girl just expanding into womanhood, combines the loveliest attributes of both—wild yet bashful, quick in transition, yet gentle and affectionate. Slender and stately as a young palm-tree, the small head, proudly carried, with a wild nobility of look, characteristic of the freedom of the forest. The features pale and statuesque, lighted up by the luminous fawn-like eyes, full of tremulous light, stealing through the long dark lashes; every movement of the supple form and unfettered limbs showing the superiority of Nature over Art, alike graceful in action or re-

pose, even as a plume when motionless or waving in the wind; the hands and feet small and symmetrically formed, while over the picturesque tunic and mantle, bordered with swan's-down and ermine, as denoting the virgin-daughter of an Indian king, floated the long silken tresses of bluest-black, fancifully wreathed with shells and flowers, the arched instep and rounded arms displaying the same gay ornaments. Such was Pocahontas in the year 1606, when during the autumnal stillness of a September day, along the grassy rampart which surrounded the great house of Powhatan, her father, at Werowocomoco, the trampling march of two or three hundred Indians announced the approach of a prisoner, whose capture being considered an achievement of the highest importance, was to be celebrated with suitable solemnity and magnificence.

This captive was Captain John Smith, a soldier of fortune, second in authority of a band of English adventurers, who, a few months previously, had landed on the shores of Chesapeake Bay, with intent to found a colony. From boyhood he had been a soldier, serving with peculiar distinction in the armies of Germany against the Turks, and crowning his military career on the plains of Regall, in Transylvania, by an action that has no equal, save in the stirring pages of Froissart—he having there, in presence of both armies and a number of Turkish ladies, victoriously encountered and slain in the lists three successive Turkish champions, whose heads, horses, and armour, were yielded to him as their conqueror.* His portrait at the age of thirty-seven, gives the idea of one who, ten or twelve years previously, at the time when these events occurred, must have been eminently handsome, especially when, as a gay young cavalry officer, charging at the head of his men, or overthrowing his adversaries in the lists before the eyes of assembled thousands. Among the strange turns of fortune which had marked his event-

* See account at the end of this article.

ful life, it was not the least to find himself a prisoner amongst the Indians in the wilds of North America, dragged into the presence of their "Great Emperor," Powhatan—a wily and ferocious chief, whom his people obeyed with fear and adoration, their greatest spirits trembling at his frown, and who, uniting in himself all the sterner attributes of his race, was accessible only to the softer emotions through the agency of his daughter—the child of his old age—the good and beautiful Pocahontas.

Although she must have heard a thousand exaggerated accounts of the exploits of the renowned warrior from the land of the pale faces, during so many months that he had struggled against the stratagems of her father and his followers; yet it is probable that she now beheld him closely for the first time, and the sight could only tend to increase her admiration, since, according to Indian ideas, stoic hardihood under the taunts of an enemy is the quality of all others most worthy of praise. With Captain Smith this intrepidity of character was too innate to yield under any circumstances; and though in the most forlorn condition that can be imagined, bruised, wounded, covered only with a loose robe that Maocassater, an Indian to whom he had formerly been kind, had thrown over him; yet in boldness of carriage he surpassed the proudest of his adversaries; and that stern contempt of death, learned amidst the defiles of Hungary and the plains of Germany, was shown in its fullest force amongst the savage enemies by whom he was surrounded.

His entrance was greeted with a great shout from all present; the tiger-like roar of three or four hundred Indians, exulting and terrible, shaking to its centre the house of Werowocomoco, but failing to move a muscle in the countenance of the prisoner thus rudely ushered into the presence of Powhatan, surrounded by his grim courtiers, savagely adorned in all the hideous glory of their war-

paint, feathers, and wild-beast skins; in addition to which, some of the most distinguished braves had small live snakes suspended from the lobe of the ear, curling their glittering folds around the necks, and sometimes raising their heads to the lips of the wearers; one and all of these savage warriors seeming to have vied with each other in endeavouring to render themselves frightful, their bronzed and muscular forms in every variety of violent action, brandishing their weapons, their large black eyes all glaring at him as at a monster.

"Before a large fire, on a seat like a bedstead, sate Powhatan, covered with a great robe of Rarowcum skins, and all the tails hanging by: a tall, and powerfully-built old man—finely proportioned, with white hair, and a countenance stern and ominous. On his right hand sate Pocahontas, on his left her younger sister: along each side of the house two rows of men, behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white down of birds, but every one with something by way of ornament—and all with great chains of beads about their necks. Presently the Queen of Appamatuk is appointed to bring the prisoner water to wash his hands—another female a bunch of feathers instead of a napkin to dry them. Then being abundantly feasted after their best barbarous manner, a long consultation is held—after which two great stones, or Pawcorances, are brought and laid at the feet of Powhatan," still sitting grimly on his rude throne with frowning and gloomy aspect. These stones but too well declare the fate intended for the prisoner—for they are the stones of sacrifice; and the introduction only serves to make the assembled mass of savage humanity heave and struggle more fiercely towards the completion of the rite.

All is tumult and excitement. Pocahontas no longer sits by

the side of her father—she has thrown herself in agony on the ground before him—twining her beautiful arms around his knees, and entreating with wild supplications and many tears for mercy! —mercy on the prisoner! Every endearing word that on former occasions she has ever used with success, she pours forth now in a flood of tender and passionate vehemence that pierces every heart but that of Powhatan. Unmoved by her appeal, he makes a sign—a dreadful rush is made upon the prisoner, every hand striving to reach him; and as many as can, by any means, lay hold upon him, seize, and drag him to the fatal stones, forcing down his head upon one of them in order to beat out his brains with their uplifted war-clubs, already swinging to destroy him, when, with a wild, resounding shriek, tearing away every object that would impede her progress, Pocahontas, forcing her way among them, throws herself across his breast, and clasping his head between her arms, lays her own upon it in breathless expectation of the event—silent, devoted, prepared to give her own young, sweet life ere his shall be sacrificed. In vain the furious clamour of the fanatic and vindictive priests—or boastful braves disappointed of their prey. As well might they attempt to remove the eagle when defending her young, as Pocahontas from him she has determined to shield. Hoarse murmurs and threats are heard on every side, quelled but by the word of Powhatan; whose mood, changing with the scene, has yielded to the love and grief of Pocahontas what a world in arms would not have wrung from him. The old history quaintly remarks: "Whereat, the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper."

In order, however, not wholly to defraud the priests and chief warriors of the entertainment they had anticipated in torturing the victim, he was carried off to a great house in the woods,

and subjected to every experiment their art could devise in order to intimidate him, but in vain. For though "the king disguised himself in the most fearfullest manner he could, with two hundred more, so black as to be more like devils than men," those iron nerves, tried for so many years in storm, siege, and battle, were beyond the pale of Indian incantation, and the next morning he was permitted to return to the fort and his companions at Jamestown. There, after every four or five days, came the gentle guardian-angel Pocahontas and her wild train, bearing provisions to the starving colonists; part always being as presents from the king or herself, the rest to be repaid as Captain Smith should dictate. His power over the Indians was now boundless, we are told, "so had he inchanted these poor soules, being their prisoner; and now Captain Newport, whom he called his father, arriving near as directly as he foretold, they esteemed him as an oracle, and had them at that submission he might command them at what he listed. That God who had created all things, they knew he adored for his God: and now they would also talk of the God of Captain Smith!"

This wonderful man, amongst his numerous endowments, possessed in a remarkable degree the power of winning to himself the hearts and minds of others. During the campaigns in which he had been engaged in the year preceding his arrival in Virginia, he had attracted the admiration and regard of a fair Turkish princess, and also of other noble ladies, whose generous intervention in his cause fall like pleasant gleams over his varied and torrent-like career, where no day was like its predecessor, but each teeming with strange and startling vicissitude. Soldier, captive, fugitive, but all in honour.

> Nobly winning, bravely daring,
> Ladies glove his bright helm wearing—
> Through paths of death.

Possessed of powers which thus enabled him to fascinate the

high-born and beautiful ladies of Europe, it excites little marvel that to the eyes of the young and inexperienced Pocahontas he should have seemed a superior being. Bred in the seclusion of the forest, accustomed only to such nurture as its primitive and superstitious occupants are wont to bestow upon their offspring—no companions or objects of admiration save the wild maidens of her tribe, and the savage feats of its young braves; in all things a simple child of nature, unskilled in the arts of her sex; a heart like that of Pocahontas, so noble, ardent, and affectionate, must have turned as naturally to the commanding and chivalrous soldier as the lowly marigold to the sun—and as purely—her whole course of conduct towards him being an undeviating flow of spontaneous child-like worship, happiest when loading him with benefits, and neither desiring nor expecting a return. There are few who, looking back on their own childhood or youth, cannot remember instances as pure and passionate—a sort of yearning idolatry towards some object that to the rest of the world offered no more interest than a stick or a stone, but who, to the childish worshipper, appeared the incarnation of all that was most perfect; and though perhaps the impression might fade in after life, yet no length of years could remove the memory of the intensity with which it had once been cherished.

But though motives more tender than those of common humanity may be supposed to have influenced all these gentle benefactresses; yet, on the part of Captain Smith, the measured terms of high and courteous respect in which the generous instances of their bounty are somewhat formally enumerated, forbid the idea that he entertained for themselves a warmer sentiment than gratitude;—glory and ambition seeming to have been his only idols:—for, though apparently every way fitted to inspire attachment, it appears to have been either his fault or his virtue never to have

reciprocated it. Such, it must be confessed, invariably inspire the deepest and most lasting attachments; possibly that under the hard rock of such a character lie some few grains of genuine gold, which appearing from time to time, are at once a reward and excuse for the ill-starred votary—who devotes heart and soul to the task of worshipping them.

Like a little flower growing under the shadow of such a rock was the young Indian maiden—her image flits through the heart like that of some inhabitant of earth ere sin was not—when woman, fresh from the hands of her creator, could love all that was worthy, good, and noble, nor blend with such devotion one tint of that strange mingling of many thoughts, sensations, feelings, passions, which men, women, aye and children also, feel now, and call it love. In reading the history of Captain Smith, it is impossible not to be struck by the resistless energy of his character; in all lands, and with all men, he occupies the position which it is the proud privilege of a master-mind to attain. Amongst the companions of his maritime adventures he was at once looked up to as their leader; prompt to remedy every deficiency—as skilful in conception as fearless in execution, nature seemed to have formed him for a great workman, but to have denied him the proper tools —all his plans being crossed, circumvented or betrayed by his unhappily-assorted associates. After his return from his imprisonment among Powhatan's Indians, for a time all went well; the hungry were filled, the discontented set to work, and industry and hope gave peaceful days and nights to the colony. Trade, too, went on briskly, and a constant interchange of presents and good offices begot so friendly a feeling in the breast of the stern old "Emperour" Powhatan, that he resolved to give a grand feast by way of giving expression to it. Accordingly, he sent forth between two and three hundred savages to conduct Captain Smith, his

friend Captain Newport, and the rest of their company, to Werowocomoco, where, surrounded by a body-guard of forty or fifty of the tallest * men his country afforded, he received them in great state. The ceremonial of reception being for "the guests to sit down on a mat opposite their host, when all present with a tuneable voice of shouting bid them welcome. After this, several of their chief men made them grand orations, testifying their love with such vehemency and such great passions, that they sweat till they drop, and are so out of breath they cannot speak; that a man would take them to be exceeding angry, or stark mad."

In this fashion, therefore, did Powhatan receive his honoured guests, "straining himself to the utmost of his greatness to entertain them with great shouts of joy, orations of protestations, and with the most plenty of victuals he could provide to feast them. Sitting upon his bed of mats, his pillow of leather embroidered after their rude manner with pearl and white beads, his attire a fair robe of skins as large as an Irish mantle, at his head and feet a handsome young woman; on each side his house sat twenty of his wives, their heads and shoulders painted red, with a great chain of white beads about each of their necks. Before those sat his chiefest men in like order in his arbour-like house, and more than forty platters of fine bread stood as a guard in two files on each side the door. Four or five hundred people made a guard behind them for our passage, and proclamation was made none upon pain of death to presume to do us any wrong or discourtesy. With many pretty discourses this great king and our captain spent the time. In feasting, feats, dancing, singing, and trading, we spent three or four days, wherein Powhatan carried himself so proudly, yet discreetly in his savage manner, as made us all admire his

* Captain Smith describes a Sasquehanock Indian, the calf of whose leg was three quarters of a yard in circumference, and all the rest of his limbs in proportion.

natural gifts. Scorning to trade as his subjects did, he bespake Captain Newport in this manner:—'Captain Newport, it is not agreeable to my greatness in this peddling manner to trade for trifles; and I esteem you also a great werowance (leader), therefore lay me down all your commodities together; what I like I will take, and in recompence give you what I think fitting their value.' Captain Smith being our interpreter, regarding Newport as his father, knowing best the disposition of Powhatan, told us his intent was only to cheat us; yet Captain Newport let Powhatan have his desire, who therefore valued his corn at such a rate that we had not four bushels for that we expected twenty hogsheads. At this Captain Smith glanced in the eyes of Powhatan many trifles, who fixed his on some blue beads; the more he desired them, the more the captain seemed to affect them, as being composed of a most rare substance of the colour of the skies, and not to be worn but by the greatest kings of the world. This made him half mad to be the owner of such strange jewels; so that ere we parted, for a pound or two of blue beads he brought over the king for two or three hundred bushels of corn, yet parted good friends. By this means blue beads grew into such estimation, that none durst wear any but their great kings, their wives and children."

Notwithstanding all this feasting and pleasing show of amity, there ran a deep under-current of mistrust and treachery, resulting at last in the discovery of a plot concerted by Powhatan, to murder all the whites. The subtle old chief, in order to mollify Captain Smith, sent his "dearest daughter, Pocahontas" to him with protestations of humility, rich presents, and assurances of "love for ever." As the Captain did not wish to proceed to extremities, he feigned to feel satisfied, and having given up to Pocahontas some prisoners who had revealed the plot, he professed to have saved their lives solely on her account, and sent them away rejoicing.

It is worthy of remark that the name of Pocahontas is seldom mentioned by any of the various early writers of the history of Virginia, without some prefix denoting her angelic disposition—jewel, nonpareil, dearest daughter, and others—her presence being always signalized by some generous or kindly action. Between the rude Indian tribes and the scarcely more polished colonists, she comes and goes like a carrier dove, waving her white wings unsullied by the contaminations to which she is exposed. No taint of dishonour or aught unbeseeming maiden modesty ever attaches itself to the name of Pocahontas. Even in the strange and frantic masque which it was the custom of her people to give on occasions of grand welcome, she is not described as one of its participants, but only as the bearer of assurances that no harm is intended; for when the Captain Governor, thinking from the horrible noise of shrieking, and the violence of the proceedings generally, that Powhatan had evil designs upon him, we are told "Presently came Pocahontas willing him to kill her if any hurt were intended." The wild revel then proceeded, than which nothing more singular or truly savage can well be imagined. That one so good and gentle as Pocahontas should have sprung from such weird ancestry, verifies the saying of Shakespeare:

> "The strawberry grows underneath the nettle;
> And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
> Neighbour'd by fruits of baser quality."
>
> Henry V., Act 1., Scene I.

As this masque is a wonderful thing in its way, and was doubtless often performed among the Indians, we give it in the words of Captain Smith: "In a fayre plain field, about a fire, presently were we presented with this anticke. Thirty young women came out of the woodes only covered behind and before, with a few green leaves, their bodies all painted, some of one colour some of anoth-

er, but all differing; their leader had a fayre payre of buck's horns on her head, and an otter's skin at her girdle and another at her arme, a quiver of arrowes at her backe, a bow and arrowes in her hand; the next had in her hand a sword, another a club, another a pot-stick; all horned alike; the rest every one with their several devises. These fiends with most hellish shoutes and cryes, rushing from among the trees cast themselves in a ring aboute the fire, singing and dancing with most excellent ill variety; oft falling into their infernall passions, and solemnly again to sing and daunce: having spent near an hour in this mascarado, as they entred, in like manner they departed. Having re-accommodated themselves they solemnly invited him to their lodgings, where he was no sooner within the house, but all these nymphs more tormented him than ever, with crowding, pressing, and hanging about him, most tediously crying, 'Love you not me?' 'Love you not me?' This salutation ended, the feast was set, consisting of all the savage dainties they could devise; some attending, others singing and dancing about them, which mirth being ended, with fire-brands instead of torches, they conducted him to his lodging."

It is worthy of remark that Pocahontas is not mentioned as dancing amongst these females, although, doubtless, according to Indian custom, she might have done so without blame. It may be presumed she would be more likely to sing some simple ditty like the following, the Indian line of the chorus being explained by the one which follows it:

SONG OF POCAHONTAS.

1.

Come to the forest, warrior fair;
For thee the feast my maids prepare
Beneath the old oak tree:
Thy foreign name I cannot speak—

But through all words I fondly seek
The sweetest one for thee.
So-an-ge-tá-ha, Sowain né mé shin.
Strong-hearted! pity me!

II.

Oh come! 'tis the sweet Moon of Leaves,*
The owaissa † builds beneath the eaves
Or sings upon the bough.
Son of the land where freedom dwells,
Of happy homes, and Sabbath bells,
A princess calls! come, Thou!
So-an-ge-tá-ha, Sowain né mé shin.
Strong-hearted! pity me!

III.

Hast thou in thy dear land a mother?
A sister dear—a friend—or brother
More dear than life to thee?
Bring all thy griefs—I'll share thy sorrow,
Till thou shalt mother—sister—borrow—
Friend—brother—all—from me.
So-an-ge-tá-ha, Sowain né mé shin.
Strong-hearted! pity me!

The innate dignity which assuredly was one of the characteristics of Pocahontas, seems worthily derived from Powhatan, her father, who never seemed to forget he was a king. On being told that Captain Newport had brought out some presents for him from England, as a crown, robe, and other coronation baubles, offering at the same time to help him to take revenge on a neighbouring tribe who had done him some grievous wrong; the proud old Indian, with a voice that seemed to come out of a vault, thus replied: "If your king have sent me presents, I also am a king, and this is my land: eight days I will stay to receive them. Your father is to come to me, not I to him, nor yet to your fort; neither

* May. † Blue-bird.

will I bite at such a bait. As for the Monacans, I can revenge my own injuries; and as for Atquanachuck, where you say your brother was slain, it is a contrary way from those parts you suppose it; but for any salt water beyond the mountains, the relations you have had from my people are false;" (here he began to draw plots on the ground of all those regions.)

On the day appointed to crown Powhatan, the presents were set before him, his basin and ewer, bed, and furniture, set up; his scarlet cloak and apparel with much ado being put on him, after being persuaded by Namontack that they would not hurt him, but "a foule trouble there was to make him kneel to receive his crown, he neither knowing the majesty nor meaning of a crown, nor bending of the knee, endured so many persuasions, examples, and instructions, as tired them all; at last, by leaning hard upon his shoulders, he a little stooped, and three having the crown in their hands, put it on his head, when by the warning of a pistoll, the boats were prepared with such a volley of shot, that the king started up in a horrible feare till he saw that all was well; then remembering himself to congratulate their kindness, he gave his *old shoes and mantle* to Captain Newport."

These presents, which had been bestowed much against the advice of Captain Smith, who well knew the effect they would produce on the uncultivated mind of a savage, immediately began to show what results might be expected. Powhatan became inflated to an extrordinary degree. The idea that the King of England should not only acknowledge him as a brother sovereign, but also send him the insignia of royalty, was an event so stupendous that his self-importance knew no bounds, and he determined as the first exercise of his royal authority to rid himself of the colonists. Accordingly, he began to plot more diligently than ever, and it was only by the intervention of his daughter that his designs were frus-

trated. "For Pocahontas, his dearest jewel and daughter, in that dark night came through the irksome woods, and told our captaine 'great cheer should be sent him by and bye; but Powhatan and all the power he could make would come after and kill us all, if they that brought it could not kill us with our owne weapons when we were at supper. Therefore, if we would live, she wished us presently to begone.' Such things as she delighted in, he would have given her, but with the tears running down her cheekes, she said she durst not seem to have any, for if Powhatan should know it, she were but dead, and so she ranne away by herself as she came."

"Fore-warned, fore-armed—they are safe"—must have been the thought of the courageous and noble-hearted Pocahontas on her return through the dark forest at midnight, when aware at a distance of the approach of the bearers of the treacherous feast, she would glide stealthily behind the trees till they had passed; congratulating herself the while that her errand would not prove fruitless. Nor less, doubtless, the satisfaction with which Captain Smith and his hungry companions would devour the good things sent them with so evil a purpose, when fully prepared to mete out a just reward to the donor. Accordingly, "within less than an hour after the departure of Pocahontas, came eight or ten lusty fellows with great platters of venison and other victual; very importunate to have us put out our matches, whose smoke they pretended made them sick, and sit downe to our victuall; but the Captaine made them taste every dish, and sent them back to tell Powhatan he knew his design, bidding him to make haste, he was ready for him."

The sweetness of danger seems to have been keenly appreciated by these hardy colonists, every day of their lives abounding in facts whose narration given by themselves in the fewest words as mere items in a business account, yet sufficiently shows the dangers and hazards they perpetually had to encounter.

But with such a governor as Captain Smith, the veriest laggard must have grown alert—the coward brave, if only from the force of example. The old spirit of "Olympagh" and "Regall" seems to have been continually at work within him, and Pocahontas, with all the ardour of her Indian blood, would have to listen to the recital of the following adventure between himself and her uncle Opechancanough, a few days after the timely warning she had given him of her father's plot against his life.

Captain Smith, with fifteen of his companions, having arrived at the house of Opechancanough, King of Pamaunkee, for the purpose of buying corn, was informed by one of their number that the house was surrounded by at least seven hundred Indians. The men were for the most part struck with terror, but their captain, after such threats and entreaties as he thought most likely to restore their courage, addressed Opechancanough as follows:—"I see, Opechancanough, your plot to murder me, but I fear it not. As yet, our men have done no harm on either side. Take, therefore, your arms; you see mine; my body shall be as naked as yours. The isle in the river is a fit place if you be contented, and the conqueror of us two, shall be lord and master over all our men. If you have not enough, fetch more, and bring what number you will, so every one bring a basket of corn, against which I will stake the value in copper; you see I have but fifteen, and our game shall be, the conqueror take all." The king, well guarded by forty or fifty of his chief men, endeavoured to allay all suspicion of unkindness; but at the same time endeavouring to draw him out of the door where the bait was guarded by at least two hundred men, besides thirty lying under a great tree that lay athwart like a barricade, with their arrows all notched, ready to shoot. This sight made the men more cowardly than ever, which, together with the audacity of the Indians, threw the captain into such a

rage, that leaping upon Opechancanough in the midst of his guards, he seized him by the long scalp-lock, and pointing his pistol to his breast led him along half dead with fear, trembling like an aspen. Having been made to deliver up his vambrace, bow, and arrows, the multitude were easily induced to lay down their arms, while the captain, still holding the trembling savage by the hair, made them an oration, in which, by judiciously intermingling threats with kindness, he obtained, for the time, his utmost wishes.

The almost superhuman bravery exhibited on this as on all other occasions, joined to a quick wit, and infinite ingenuity in turning their superstitious fears to his own advantage, gave him from this time so much authority over them, that the whole country became as free to the English as to themselves. Nevertheless, Powhatan's hatred was inextinguishable, and a few days afterwards would have shown itself by murdering Richard Wyffin, a friend of the captain's, who had called at the house of Powhatan, had it not been for Pocahontas, who hid him for a time, sending those who pursued him in an opposite direction: by her efforts, extraordinary bribes, and much trouble, in three days' travel he at length rejoined the captain.

In 1609 Captain Smith resolved to resign the thankless and laborious office he had long filled with so much honour. In addition to the treachery of the Indians, he had nothing but ingratitude and circumvention from those with whom he was associated; and meeting also at this time with a dreadful accident from the explosion of a bag of gunpowder, when in an open boat on the river, he resolved to return to England. The absence of the shepherd was soon taken advantage of by the wolf, for Powhatan took an opportunity to perpetrate a dreadful massacre on a party of thirty-two, who, without due precautions, were bartering with him for corn. Thirty were slain, one escaped, and a young boy of

good descent, named Henry Spillman, was rescued by Pocahontas, through whose intercession he was received amongst the Pata womekes, where residing many years, he became a proficient in their language, and did good service many times between them and his own countrymen.

Pocahontas also sought refuge with the same friendly nation, being heard of no more at Jamestown after the departure of Captain Smith until 1611, when Captain Argall, whose ship was then lying in the River Potomac, having in London frequently heard his friend Captain Smith eulogize Pocahontas as the "nonpareil of Virginia," conceived the idea of making her his prisoner, in order to induce Powhatan to more favourable negotiations with him. Having had an interview with Japawzaws, an old Indian, who had formerly been a friend of Captain Smith, he entered into a treaty with him to decoy Pocahontas aboard under pretence of seeing the ship, solemnly assuring him that no further harm than a short imprisonment was intended her. Japawzaws listened as though he heard not, until the ravishing gleam of a copper-kettle displayed before him as the reward, completely overpowered every scruple, and he at once repaired to Pocahontas, taking care, however, to carry his wife along with him, thinking that she might prove a valuable aid; nor was he mistaken, for Pocahontas, who had seen many ships, had no curiosity to visit that of Captain Argall, and would have totally negatived the proposals of Japawzaws, but for the tears of his wife, who pretending never to have seen the interior of one, was so importunate with her husband to allow her to go aboard, that with much pretended violence he threatened to beat her, whereat she wept still more, insomuch that pretending to relent, he told her that if Pocahontas would accompany her he was content. It was not in the nature of Pocahontas to withstand tears and supplications, she therefore accompanied her betrayers to

the vessel, where a fine entertainment was served to them in the cabin, and every attention and kindness shown to them by Captain Argall, who, during the repast, had to undergo repeated pressures on his toes from the foot of Japawzaws, intended as intimations that he had fulfilled his part of the contract and now wanted the reward. Acting upon this hint the captain requested Pocahontas to retire for a little while into the gun-room, in order that he might confer on some private matter with Japawzaws; this was to the effect that she might not think the latter was privy to her detention. On sending for her again, Captain Argall told her in the presence of Japawzaws and his wife, that she must accompany him until such time as peace was concluded with her father, whom she must never expect to see again until that event had taken place.

The poor deceived Pocahontas wept long and violently, while the two base creatures who had inveigled her into the snare set up the most terrible howlings, bewailing their unhappy fate even more loudly than Pocahontas; who upon the captain's fair persuasions, by degrees pacifying herself, Japawzaws and his wife, with their beloved kettle and other toys, went merrily ashore, and Pocahontas was conveyed prisoner to James Town—a sad return for all her disinterested kindness to that place and its inhabitants. A messenger having been dispatched to Powhatan informing him that he must ransom the daughter he loved so dearly, with the men, weapons, and commodities he had stolen, the old chief, though deeply exasperated deigned no answer, and three months passed ere he condescended, (on being again urged) "to send back seven of our men with each an unserviceable musket." After a long time, during which many bravados and skirmishes took place, a truce was proclaimed, and two of Powhatan's sons came to see their sister, with whom they had a most joyful and rejoicing meeting. Master John Rolfe, and Master Sparks, then accompanied these

brothers to Powhatan; but though kindly entertained, he would not admit them to his presence. Master Rolfe having conceived a violent passion for Pocahontas, a marriage was concluded between them; Powhatan not choosing to honour the ceremony with his presence, but sending as his deputy, an old uncle of Pocahontas, named Opachisco, who with the two young men, her brothers, did what was necessary on his behalf for the confirmation of the marriage. After this event, the lovely messenger of the wilderness was known no more as Pocahontas, but was styled the "Lady Rebecca"—instructed in the English language, baptized and converted to the Christian faith, of which she is said to have been "most capable and desirous," as also "that she had no desire to return to her father, nor could well endure the society of her owne nation; bearing most true and constant affection to her husband, by whom she had one son, whom she most dearly loved." It is also related of her that "she became very *formal* and *civil* after the English manner, and that divers persons of great rank and quality were very kind to her on her arrival in England, whither she had accompanied her husband." Captain Smith, on hearing that she was in England, wrote a short memorial concerning her, addressed to Anne of Denmark, wife to James I., in which, after enumerating the valuable services she had rendered the colony, he asks the royal favour for her "exceeding desert, her birth, virtue, want, and simplicity." In consequence of this appeal, Pocahontas was presented to the King and Queen,* as well as to many of the nobility, who, in afterwards speaking of her, generally concluded "that God had a great hand in her conversion, and that they had seen many English ladies *worse* favoured, proportioned, and behavoured."

This style of panegyric, be it remembered, applies not to the beautiful Indian maiden, graceful in her own national garb, and

* She had also her portrait taken in the horrible costume of that period.

lightly springing along the prairie, but to the "Lady Rebecca"—*instructed, baptized, converted, formal, civil*, wearing an Anne of Denmark hat and short feather, a long tight boddice, a monstrous ruff, and still more monstrous hooped-petticoat and farthingale, bearing the same resemblance to her former self as does the airy blue-bell when pressed, dried, and pasted down in a lady's album, to its wild sisters, nodding gaily in the sunshine between the fern and fox-glove. But, 'twas but outside change after all—the heart beat truly, softly, still. When Captain Smith went to see her before setting sail for New England, he says, "after a modest salutation she turned away, and hiding her face, spake not to any one for two or three hours." When she began to talk she said, "You did promise Powhatan what was yours should be his, and he the like to you; you called him father, being in his land a stranger, and by the same reason so must I do you." The captain here with grave formality says, "which though I would have excused, I durst not allow of that title, because she was a king's daughter; with a well-set countenance, she said, 'Were you not afraid to come into my father's country, and caused fear in him and all his people but me, and fear you here I should call you father? I tell you then I will, and you shall call me child, and so I will be for ever and ever your countryman.'" Then, as if in the fullness of her heart, she thus concludes: "They did tell us always you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plymouth; yet Powhatan did command Uttamotomakkin to seek you and know the truth, because your countrymen will lie much." This savage, one of Powhatan's chief men, was purposely sent by the king to number the English and inform him of their condition. Arriving at Plymouth, he got a long stick and made a notch on it for every person he met, but soon grew weary of the task. Meeting Captain Smith accidentally in London, he told him Powhatan had ordered him to find him

out, that he might show him his God, king, queen, and prince. He was told that he had already seen the king, but could hardly be persuaded that King James could be a king. Then he said very sadly, "You gave Powhatan a white dog, which Powhatan fed as himself; but your king gave me nothing, and I am better than a dog." When Powhatan, on his return, asked him how many people there were in England, he answered, "Count the stars in the sky, the leaves on the trees, and the sands upon the sea shore; for such is their number."

Shortly after the interview of Pocahontas with Captain Smith, when at Gravesend, a small port about twenty-five miles from London, when about to embark with her husband and child for America, she was taken ill of violent fever, and died very suddenly. Her little son, Thomas Rolfe, was left at Plymouth, with Sir Lewis Stukeley, who desired to take charge of it. The words that describe her death are, "It pleased God, at Gravesend, to take this young lady to his mercy, where she made not more sorrow for her unexpected death than joy to the beholders to hear and see her make so religious and godly an end."

Thus perished untimely, in the bloom of life, the lovely and benign Pocahontas, whose whole life was a pure and freshening stream of love and goodness to all with whom she came in contact; and whose sweet life may serve as a remembrancer to the daughters of civilization, how little lower than the angels, a life passed in practising the mild and gentle virtues of her sex, could make even an untutored child of nature like Pocahontas—from whom, at this day, many of the first families in Virginia are proud to trace their descent.

DIRGE OF POCAHONTAS.

I.

The graceful Mondamin * lies shatter'd and broken
In the pride of her blooming, ere touched by decay;
In the land of the stranger, her grave the sole token,
The Flower of Windagua † is withered away.

II.

No more her swift foot o'er the prairie is bounding,
No more her canoe lightly skims o'er the bay;
Her maidens in sorrow the reed-flutes are sounding;
The flower of Windagua is withered away.

Captain Smith died in London, in the year 1631, aged fifty-two. His encounter with the three Turks, alluded to in the beginning of this article, is as follows:

"In the plaines of Regall is a city not only of men and fortifications, stronge of itselfe, but so environed with mountaines that made the passages so difficult, that in all these warres no attempt had been made upon it to any purpose. To possess himselfe first of the most convenient passage, which was a narrow valley betwixt two high mountaines, the commander, Earl Meldritch, sent Colonel Veltus with his regiment, to lye in ambuscade and to drive all the cattle they could find before a fort in that passage, whom he supposed would sally, seeing but some small party, to recover their prey; which took such good success that the garrison was cut off by the ambuscade and the Skonces seized; yet, six days elapsed ere with six thousand pioneers he could make a passage for his ordnance. The Turkes having such warning, strengthened the towne, made frequent sallies upon the besiegers, and scornfully deriding the slow progress they were compelled of necessity to make, declared their ordnance were at pawn, and how they grew fat for

* The Indian maize plant. † Wingandocoa; Indian name of Virginia.

want of exercise, and fearing they should depart ere they could assault the city, sent this challenge to any captaine in the Christian army. That to delight the ladies, who did long to see some court-like pastime, the Lord Turbashawe did defie any captaine that had the command of a company who durst combat with him for his head. The matter being discussed, it was accepted; but so many questions grew for the undertaking, that it was decided by lots, which fell upon Captain Smith.

"Truce being made for the time, the Rampiers all beset with faire dames and men in armes, the Christians in Battalio; Turbashawe with a noise of howboyes entred the field, well mounted and armed: on his shoulders was fixed a great pair of wings, composed of eagle's feathers within a ridge of silver, richly garnished with gold and precious stones, a janizary before him, bearing his lance; on each side another, leading his horse; where long he staid not, ere Smith with a noise of trumpets, only a page bearing his lance, passing by him with a courteous salute, took his ground with such goode successe, that at the sound of the charge, he passed the Turke thorow the sight of his beaver, face, head and all, that he fell dead to the ground, where alighting and unbracing his helmet, cut off his head, and the Turkes tooke his body; and so returned without any hurt at all. The head he presented to the Lord Moyses, the generall, who kindly accepted it; and with joy to the whole armie he was generally welcomed.

"The death of this captaine so swelled in the heart of one Grualzo, his vowed friend, as rather inraged with madnesse than choller, he directed a particular challenge to the conqueror, to regaine his friend's head or lose his owne, with his horse and armour for advantage, which according to his desire was the next day undertaken; as before, upon the sound of the trumpets, their lances flew to pieces upon a cleare passage; but the Turke was neere

unhorsed. Their pistolls were the next, which marked Smith upon the placard; but the next shot, the Turke was so wounded in the left arme, that being not able to rule his horse and defend himselfe, he was throwne to the ground, and so bruised with the fall, that he lost his head, as his friend before him; with his horse and armour; but his body and his rich apparell was sent backe to the towne.

"Every day the Turkes made some sallies, but few skirmishes would they endure to any purpose. Our workes and approaches being not yet advanced to that height and effect which was of necessitie to be performed, to delude time, Smith with so many incontradictible perswading reasons, obtained leave that the ladies might know he was not so much enamoured of their servants' heads, but that any Turke of their ranke who would come to the place of combate to redeeme them, should have his also upon the like conditions, if he could winne it.

"The challenge was accepted by a formidable Turke named Bona Mulgro. The next day the champions entering the field as before: each discharging their pistolls, having no lances, but such martial weapons as the defendant appointed, no hurt was done; their battle-axes were the next, whose piereing bills made sometimes the one, sometimes the other to have scarce sense to keepe their saddles, specially the Christian received such a blow that he lost his battle-axe, and failed not much to have fallen after it, whereat the supposing conquering Turke had a great shout from the rampiers. The Turke prosecuted his advantage to the uttermost of his power; yet the other, what by the readinesse of his horse, and his judgment and dexterity in such a businesse, beyonde all men's expectation, by God's assistance, not onely avoided the Turke's violence, but having drawne his faulchion, pierced the Turke so under the culets thorow backe and body, that although

he alighted from his horse, he stood not long ere he lost his head, as the rest had done. This good successe gave such great encouragement to the whole armie, that with a guard of six thousand, three spare horses, before each a Turke's head upon a lance, he was conducted to the Generall's Pavillion with his presents. Moyses received both him and them with as much respect as the occasion deserved, embracing him in his armes, gave him a faire horse, richly furnished, a semitere and belt, worth three hundred ducats; and Meldritch made him Serjeant Major of his regiment. Sigismundus coming to view his armie, and being made acquainted with the service Smith had done at Olumpagh, Stowle, Wesenburg, and Regall; with great honour gave him three Turke's heads in a shield for his armes, by Patent under his hand and seale, with an oath ever to wear them in his colours, his picture in gould, and three hundred ducats yearly for a pension."

LA VALLIÈRE.

Louise Françoise de La Vallière was made up of feminine tenderness. She was tender unto softness; modest unto diffidence; gentle unto timidity. Her nature was so tender that it divided itself wholly between love of heaven, and love for one sole earthly object. Her love for heaven was trembling adoration; her love for her lover was idolatry. She gave heaven her repentant worship after giving her lover all heart-worship. She was a signal instance of a woman loving a monarch for himself; she loved the man, not the king, in Louis XIV. She was born in 1644; and came of distinguished parentage. Her mother married again; and this second husband, being in the household of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, Mademoiselle de La Vallière passed her early years at the court of that prince, residing alternately at Orleans and at Blois. Her youth was marked by sweetness of disposition and discreet behaviour; and when the king's only brother espoused Henrietta of England, daughter to Charles I., Mademoiselle de La Vallière was placed about her person, as maid of honour. Shining in the midst of a brilliant scene, taking part in the pleasures of a young and gallant court, she won the esteem of all, by her rectitude, her innate love of virtue, her gentle manners, and the sincerity and simplicity which distinguished her. Her personal advantages,

which exceeded her mental endowments, attracted universal admiration. The Duchess of Orleans—Elizabeth Charlotte—thus describes her:—"Her countenance possessed an inexpressible charm; she had a delicate shape; and her eyes appeared to me far more beautiful than those of Madame Montespan. Her deportment was modesty itself. She limped slightly; but that did not detract from her grace."

In the habit of constantly beholding Louis XIV., the "tender and susceptible heart" of which La Vallière herself makes frequent mention, became fascinated by the embodiment he formed of her young ideal. In her eyes he showed a hero—a hero of romance in living perfection,—young, handsome, princely, radiant with glory and renown. He inspired her with the liveliest admiration, which soon ripened into the liveliest affection. Her timid nature shrunk from admitting even to herself her sentiments; but its tenderness could not resist the bewitching influence of passion. Her very gentleness of disposition made her vainly attempt to subdue love by duty; her gentleness softened into weakness, instead of gathering strength from effort. Such characters as La Vallière's, reap no courage from warmth of heart; their best virtue is submission. They are moral cowards, notwithstanding their fervour. The best womanly tenderness generates fortitude of mind; the tenderness of such a woman as La Vallière degenerates with feebleness of soul. Her attachment for Louis was a fond and exclusive preference; it absorbed her thoughts, and engrossed her whole being. Her piety towards heaven was not so much an active principle, as a helpless leaning upon devotion as a resource—a turning for support towards divine comfort, when earthly trust had failed. La Vallière's tenderness limited, not enlarged her spirit; but, within that limit, it was beautiful of its kind. It rendered her meek, unreproachful, and purely disinterested. It

enabled her to sustain injurious treatment that would have maddened a woman of less yielding temper; and it caused her to love with a prodigality, that made love itself all-sufficing to her happiness. Through all the various inclinations for other women which Louis XIV. by turns indulged, he constantly returned to her, who, by her genuine affection, more than by the charms of her person, had won him without art or guile.

It was at Fontainebleau, in 1661, that the intimacy of their connexion commenced. During two years, Mademoiselle de la Vallière was the secret object of all the entertainments and brilliant pastimes given at court. The celebrated fête at Versailles, which, under the title of "The Pleasures of the Enchanted Isle," occupied seven entire days, was ostensibly in honour of the queen-mother, and queen-consort, but was in reality a gallantry on the part of Louis XIV. offered at the feet of the young beauty he had wooed and won. The royal amour, though studiously concealed from the principal personages concerned, was not so absolutely a mystery but that it was suspected by many; and various evidence may be traced that the real centre of the king's purposed homage in giving this magnificent festivity, was tacitly understood to be the lovely Mademoiselle de la Vallière. The description of the seven days' entertainment bears testimony of the regal splendour and rich taste exercised by Louis XIV., on this occasion. Not only were the pageants and banquets of the most sumptuous description, but the talent of Lulli, and the genius of the great Molière himself, were enlisted to lend the refinements of music, wit, poetry, and dramatic representation, to adorn the scene. The king himself took part in the first day's pageant, which had for subject the Palace of Alcinoë, where Ruggiero and his brave knights are assembled to enjoy the pleasures of the Enchanted Isle. Louis, who represented Ruggiero, is described as "mounted on a superb

charger; its harness of the colour of fire, and shining resplendent with gold, silver, and precious stones. His Majesty himself was armed in the Grecian style; and wore a cuirass of silver, covered with a rich embroidery of gold and diamonds. His action and whole deportment were worthy of his rank; his helmet, covered with flame-coloured plumes, was incomparably elegant; and never did an air more lofty, more martial, exalt a mortal above his fellow-men."

Molière's "Princesse d'Elide," "Les Fâcheux," the first three acts of his admirable "Tartuffe," and "Le Mariage Forcé," formed the chief substance of the second, fifth, sixth, and seventh days' several entertainments. In the first-named of these dramas there occurs a passage which affords one of those instances above alluded to, of the idea that prevailed of the king's partiality for Mademoiselle de La Vallière, and of her being the secret object of this unparalleledly tasteful entertainment. The upholding of an amourous passion, as the crowning princely quality in a youthful royal nature, is a subtle compliment addressed to Louis's admiration for the fair young creature who was real queen of the fête, instead of its apparent queens—the (in every sense) *nominal* queens.

The lines are put into the mouth of Arbate, tutor to the young prince, Euryale; and are addressed to him:—

"Et bien que mon sort touche à ses derniers soleils,
Je dirai que l'amour sied bien à vos pareils;
Que ce tribut qu'on rend aux traits d'un beau visage,
De la beauté d'une ame est un clair témoignage,
Et qu'il est malaisé que, sans être amoureux,
Un jeune prince soit et grand et généreux.
C'est une qualité que j'aime en un monarque;
La tendresse du cœur est une grande marque
Que d'un prince à votre âge on peut tout présumer,
Dès qu'on voit que son ame est capable d'aimer.
Oui cette passion, de toutes la plus belle,

Traîne dans un esprit cent vertus après elle;
Aux nobles actions elle pousse les cœurs,
Et tous les grands héros ont senti ses ardeurs."

Which—for the few who are unfamiliar with French—may be rendered thus:—

[" Although my old life numbers years in long suns,
Young blood, such as yours, fervent loving becomes.
I maintain that the homage you pay a sweet face,
Is proof of your judgment, your feeling, and grace;
And unless a young prince be deeply in love,
He's scarce to be ranked usual great ones above.
'Tis a point I admire in monarchs to see:
Tender-hearted and gracious young rulers should be;
In a prince of your age we look for this sign
That all may be hoped from a nature so fine.
Believe me, this passion, the finest of all,
Brings myriad virtues in train with its thrall;
To loftiest actions it prompteth the soul,
And heroes the greatest have owned its control."]

Amidst the general assemblage of ladies, La Vallière could enjoy, undistinguished, the splendours of this gorgeous fête, and accept, unobserved, the compliment it conveyed to herself from her royal lover. Its veiled meaning precisely suited her retiring disposition, and soothed her scruples of delicacy. She dreaded nothing so much as open attentions. It was neither from vanity nor ambition, that she loved the sovereign of France; she had a genuine affection for him, never throughout her life having a single other attachment, and desiring that he alone should know of her love, as he alone possessed it. Her first pregnancy was concealed with so much care, that no one in the court was aware of the circumstance; and the queen had no suspicion of it. Two only, of the four children she had by Louis, lived—Marie-Anne de Bourbon, named Mademoiselle de Blois, afterwards Princess de Conti, born in 1666; and the Count de Vermandois, born in 1667. In

that year, the king created a duchy from two baronies, and the estate of Vaujour in favour of Mademoiselle de La Vallière, and the princess, her daughter. When she received this honour, and when her children were legitimatized, she was much troubled: for she had thought that her being a mother ought to remain unknown; or at any rate, that it should be left unacknowledged. It is worthy of note, that she always called her daughter "Mademoiselle;" while the princess called her "belle maman." Madame de Sévigné alluded to Madame de La Vallière, when she wrote thus in 1680:—"You must imagine her" (Madame de Montespan), "precisely the opposite of that little violet who hid herself beneath the grass; and who was ashamed of being mistress, mother, and duchess. There will never be another of her stamp." La Vallière was—so to speak—virtuous in the midst of her errors; for each fresh fault cost her as much as her first step in guilt. She was modest in the midst of her frailty; for she avoided its evidences, and shrank from its preferments. The marks of superior distinction and regard which the king bestowed upon her in preference to the queen, were distasteful to her reason and sense of right. His tokens of favour, thus conferred, hurt her delicacy. In this respect, she was tempted to complain of being too well loved—she, whose own abundant love involuntarily craved correspondent return. Very different from most royal favourites, she never once took advantage of her influence. She loved the king—not his power. Her patronage confined itself to intercession for those persons who had displeased Louis, and to solicitations for those who needed assistance or advancement—without exceptional bias in favour of her own relations. Her absence of mercenary spirit is testified in the case of Fouquet; who, being struck with the early charms of Mademoiselle de La Vallière, and utterly unscrupulous in his modes of satisfying his transitory inclinations, offered the young

maid of honour the sum of £8,000, an offer which she rejected with indignation, although at that time entertaining no idea of having attracted the king's attention, nor any hope of winning his heart. At a court with a school of morals like that amidst which La Vallière dwelt, such conduct has sufficient singularity to give it merit; otherwise, from a young lady, a similar refusal would be nothing extraordinary—nay, not worth recording. In her case, it deserves praise. Her disinterestedness is also evinced in a subsequent incident of her life;—when her brother died, in 1676, she entreated the king to retain the post filled by the Marquis de La Vallière, in acquittal of his debts, without alluding in the slightest way to her nephews. Her discretion, and freedom from all self-seeking, during the season of her ascendancy, caused her to be entrusted unhesitatingly with the most important secrets by her royal lover; who obtained from her a promise to be equally candid on her side, and conceal nothing from him. The single instance recorded, in which can be traced her possessing courage to act with independence and firmness, does her honour—although natural timidity soon regained its characteristic sway. It seems that, in a certain delicate case, where a friend's concerns were at stake, she failed to disclose the secret to the king, notwithstanding her promise to tell him every thing. This was much for her—so tender and so willingly sincere—to risk giving offence in love, for the sake of preserving faith in friendship. But, upon Louis's penetrating the mystery, and reproaching her keenly for withholding any thing from his knowledge, her short-lived courage failed her, and—in the trouble, confusion, and consternation of finding she had incurred her lover's displeasure—she crept at early morning from the Tuileries palace, where she still dwelt in attendance on the princess Henrietta, and took refuge in the convent of Ste Marie, at Chaillot. However, being sought with extreme diligence, and

speedily discovered, she was prevailed upon to return; where she resumed her chains, only to be more closely riveted than ever.

Meantime, modest and retiring—as she had always been—she continued to behold only the king himself in all the homage, public and private, that surrounded her. A look from Louis—a single smile from this beloved master—crowned her fondest wishes.

Allusions to the characteristics of Madame de La Vallière are to be found in another court dramatist of the time. Racine's "Bérénice" contains many unequivocal points in reference to Louis XIV. and his tender mistress, under figure of the Emperor Titus and the heroine of the play. Bérénice exclaims—

"Jugez de ma douleur, moi dont l'ardeur extrême,
Je vous l'ai dit cent fois, n'aime en lui qui lui-même,
Moi qui, loin des grandeurs dont il est revêtu,
Aurais choisi son cœur et cherché sa vertu."

["Judge of my grief: I, whose ardent affection
Loves in him but himself, has no other direction;
Had I known him apart from his grandeur's condition,
His heart and his virtues had roused my ambition."]

And afterwards, she addresses Titus himself, thus:—

"Depuis quand croyez-vous que ma grandeur me touche?
Un soupir, un regard, un mot de votre bouche,
Voilà l'ambition d'un cœur comme le mien:
Voyez-moi plus souvent, et ne me donnez rein."

["Since when, can you think, that my greatness concerns me,
A sigh, look, or word from your mouth, is what burns me;
These, these, are the aims of a heart such as mine:
See me more oft, give me nought that is thine."]

In the midst of her fond weakness, however, she never ceased —with the instinct of her soft nature—to seek a sense of sustainment, and consciousness of some endeavour on her own part, from the strict performance of her religious duties. No appointed

periods of fasting and prayer appeared too long or too severe for her; no church observances, during which the custom of the world, or the etiquette of the court prescribed an abstinence from pleasure and gaiety, did she neglect. They were hailed as a kind of respite—moments of suspended wrong—occasions of temporary good—which she might employ in making a virtuous return within herself, and indulge the pious yearnings her tender nature had ever nourished. La Vallière may be called a saintly sinner; for through all her mundane aberrations, she preserved a constant regard for sacred institutions. Her Catholic creed well suited with her loving and gentle character; its promises of mercy and pardon towards erring mortality when repentant, its consoling hopes, its cheering absolution, were precisely needed by a soul at once affectionate and timid.

During the time when La Vallière was the declared mistress of the king—which did not prevent numerous infidelities on his part—Louis yielded to the fancy with which he was inspired for Madame de Montespan. This latter, wanting in delicacy—both as a woman, and as one who loved—consented to live in companionship with Madame de La Vallière, sharing the same table, and almost the same apartments with her. "She preferred at first," says Madame de Caylus, "that the king should arrange it thus; either because she hoped thereby to mislead the public and her husband, or because her pride took greater pleasure in the humiliation of her rival, than alarm lest the charms of this latter should countervail her own."

The meek-spirited La Vallière—ever incapable of any other sentiment than love, with fond clinging to its object—remained, not only at the court, but in the train of Madame de Montespan; who heartlessly abused her advantages. Numberless were the affronts, the mortifications, that La Vallière had to endure the whole

of the time she still stayed at Versailles. Her heart was wrung by them; but she rarely complained, deeming herself still happy that she could behold him she had no power to cease loving as if he had not changed towards her. One day, when she ventured mournfully to tell the king of the pain she felt in this consociation, he answered coldly, that he was too frank to conceal the truth from her; and that she must be aware that a king of his disposition did not like to be controuled. She is said to have addressed a sonnet to Louis on this occasion; and it is added, that the verses were praised by him, although he contented himself with assuring his first mistress that he should ever regard her with esteem; but there is doubt as to the sonnet having been La Vallière's own composition. It is supposed to have been written for her by some one of the men of letters whom she, as Duchess de La Vallière, was acquainted with, and encouraged. However that may be, there is sufficient evidence existing, that, at this time, Madame de La Vallière suffered much unkindness. The Duchess of Orleans said: "The king treated her very ill, at the instigation of Madame de Montespan; that he was harsh with her, and ironical to a degree of insult; that the poor creature imagined she could not make a greater sacrifice to God, than in sacrificing to Him the very origin of her misdeeds, and believed she was doing the more rightly, since her penance emanated from the same source where she had sinned; and therefore she stayed, as a penance, with La Montespan."

It was in 1674 that the Duchess de La Vallière put in practice a resolution she had long formed. In the month of February, 1671, she had retired, for the second time, to the convent of Ste Marie de Chaillot, wishing to weep there uninterruptedly. She wrote to the king, that "she should sooner have quitted Versailles, after having had the misfortune to lose his good graces, if she could

have induced herself never more to behold him; that this weakness had been so invincible, that it was hardly even yet she felt capable of making such a sacrifice to God; that she trusted, however, the passion she still entertained for him might serve her in her penitence, and that after having given him her youth, it was not too much to dedicate the remainder of her life to the care of her salvation." Madame de Sévigné, who records this, adds:—"The king wept abundantly, and sent Monsieur Colbert to Chaillot, entreating her to return immediately to Versailles, that she might speak with him again. Monsieur Colbert conducted her back; the king talked for an hour with her, and was affected to tears."

After some days, to the great vexation of the reigning favourite, Madame de La Vallière appeared to be on better terms with the monarch than she had been for a long time past. Two years elapsed without the duchess showing any sign that she had recurred to her idea of retirement from the world; but a severe illness, which reduced her to the verge of the grave, brought her back fully to the design of retrieving her past life. The "Reflections on the Mercy of God," which she was said to have written, on her recovery, forms a transcript of the sentiments at that time occupying her mind; although it is by no means certain that she was its author. Her confidential friend was the Maréchal de Bellefond; he it was who had carried her letter to the king. Madame de La Vallière also possessed an excellent guide and adviser in Bossuet, then bishop of Condom. It is to the Maréchal de Bellefond that those letters of Madame de La Vallière are addressed, which have been printed, and the first of which is dated June, 1673. On the 21st November, she writes thus to her friend, the maréchal:—"I feel that, notwithstanding the magnitude of my fault—which is ever present to me—love has a greater part in my

sacrifice, than the necessity for doing penance." This passage affords a characteristic epitome of La Vallière's nature. It shows how, with her, religious love was but the substitute for secular love; and that when the one was debarred, the other was adopted. Love was the necessity of La Vallière's tender temperament. Love for Louis XIV., if possible; if not, love for heaven. She thought that alone worthy to succeed to the king in her affections. Her royal lover was the first object of her soul; next to him, God. It is curious to notice how closely upon irreverence, these weakly-revering characters trench. Soft, sweet, and loving, La Vallière's tenderness wanted strength to be high-souled. But it was gentle, and beautifully meek. Never, but on one occasion, was that mild disposition betrayed into bitterness of expression. It was when, having finally decided upon quitting the court, she said to Madame de Scarron (afterwards Madame de Maintenon), who had sought to dissuade her from immuring herself in a cloister:—"Whenever I may endure sorrow at the convent, I shall call to mind what those people have made me suffer." She alluded to the king and Madame de Montespan. The pang must have been great indeed that could cause her to speak of Louis in such terms! Coupling him with her rival, to speak of them as "those people" (ces gens-là!) Her heart must have been sore to writhing, before it could have smarted her tender nature into such contemptuous utterance.

She resolved upon the convent of the Carmelites for her retreat; and took leave publicly of the king, who witnessed her departure with dry eyes. She was then not above thirty years of age. The Abbé de Fromentières, afterwards bishop of Aire, pronounced the customary sermon that celebrated her noviciateship; taking for his text, the parable of the lost sheep, gathered into the fold by the good shepherd.

Her profession as nun, took place on the 3d of June, 1675. The queen herself placed the black veilon the head of Madame de La Vallière; and her friend, Bossuet, bishop of Condom, celebrated for his powers of Christian eloquence, delivered the sermon on this occasion. Madame de Sévigné gives an account of the ceremony in one of her letters; which, while it testifies the public esteem in which Madame de La Vallierè was held, and the universal interest she inspired in the circle where she had moved, affords a lively picture of the manners of the time, when court intrigues, court piety, court ladies, court divines, are all discussed in a gay mingling of gossip which deals almost equally lightly with the anxiety for places at a fashionable ceremonial, and with the solemn event it celebrated,—with the king's regret for his former mistress, his giving her up to a superior claimant (viz: Heaven!) and his liberal provision for his own child by her as a proof of his affection! This is what she says:—"Yesterday, the Duchess de La Vallière was professed. Madame de Villars promised to take me there; and by some misunderstanding, we feared we should not get a place. We had but to present ourselves, although the queen had said that she did not wish the privilege extended; however, God would not have it so, and Madame de Villars was quite afflicted. But she performed this action—this beautiful creature—as she did all her others; that's to say, in a manner the most charming. Her loveliness amazes everybody. But what will astonish you, is, that the sermon of Monsieur de Bossuet was not so divine as we all expected. So many virtues, joined to the most touching charms of person, made Louis XIV. feel very acutely the loss of such a heart as Madame de La Vallière. He was obliged to yield it to heaven, which alone was worthy to possess it. But what he has done for Mademoiselle de Blois, whom he married to the Prince de Conti, proves to what a degree he loved the mother."

Madame de Caylus wrote, at a much later period, that she had seen her in the latter years of her life, and that she had heard her, with a tone of voice that went to the heart, uttering admirable things upon the condition and happiness she already tasted, notwithstanding the rigour of her penance.

The queen and the Duchess of Orleans, used to visit, in her convent, sister Louisa of Mercy; and it was to the former—the wife of Louis XIV.—that the penitent nun answered, in 1676:—"No, I am not glad; but I am content." It was not agreeable to her own feelings, this having frequently to receive the queen, and several of the court ladies, who came, as they said, to profit by the edification afforded by the holy nun; but, with her native gentleness, she submitted to the necessity. It was a kind of fashion; one of those elegant amusements under the name of religious avocations adopted by fine ladies, to soothe their consciences by a show of devotional enthusiasm, in the midst of gaieties that grow insipid by too uninterrupted a monotony of recurrence. When Paris and Versailles cloyed, a visit to the convent of the Carmelites, formed an agreeable variety—at once a relaxation, and a piece of propriety. When Montespan's caprices wearied, and "le grand monarque's" glories palled upon the appetites of the court ladies, a morning with La Vallière, to witness how decorously she fulfilled her vocation, was a delectable pleasure. It was like—to use a French turn of expression—assisting at a performance, and observing how well the part of a nun was enacted by an ex-maid of honour. Another of Madame de Sévigné's letters contains a passage confirming this idea of the tone of court feeling then prevailing. In 1679, Madame de La Vallière had to face the compliments of the whole polite world, to undergo the congratulations of the court, the Parisian circles, the fashionable populace entire, upon the marriage of her daughter; and it was upon this occasion that

Madame de Sévigné writes, in her usual peculiarly French style of touching upon highest and trivialest things in a breath, which seems to our staider notions little else than elegant levity :—"She seasoned perfectly her tenderness as a mother, with that of the spouse of Jesus Christ. She was still handsome, in 1680 ; possessing much grace, a fine air, together with the noblest and most touching modesty. In truth, this habit, and this retreat, impart to her a great dignity." It is singular to notice what stress French minds lay upon *becomingness* in every act or appearance they record of a person. They admire great deeds ; but, above all, they admire them greatly performed.

To parody Hamlet's words :—

> Rightly to be great,
> Is, not to stir without great pompousness,
> But greatly to find grandeur in a straw.

In the month of November, 1683, Bossuet having undertaken to announce to Madame de La Vallière the death of the Count de Vermandois, she at first shed many tears ; but suddenly recovering herself, she exclaimed :—"I am weeping too much the death of a son, whose birth I have not yet sufficiently wept."

From the year 1675 to 1710, she lived practising the greatest austerities. She consecrated to heaven all that warmth of tenderness which constituted her nature ; and poured forth at the foot of the altar that passionate softness of which her heart was compounded. Her sweetness of temper enabled her to triumph in the worthiest—because the most Christian-spirited manner—over her former rival ; for upon one occasion, when Madame de Montespan came with the queen in April, 1766, to see her, and inquired if there was any thing she wished to have said to the king, she evaded answering, with a grace and amiability the most complete, although feeling deeply hurt. Many years afterwards she achieved

a still more signal triumph of meekness and forgiveness; for Madame de Montespan, being herself no longer at court, returned to the convent of the Carmelites, where Madame de La Vallière became for her a kind of spiritual director.

On the 6th of June, 1710, Louise de La Vallière expired, after having been a long sufferer from protracted and painful infirmities. The Abbé de Choisy, in his memoirs, has bequeathed us a written portrait of her: "Mademoiselle de La Vallière was not one of those perfect beauties, who are often admired without being loved. She was very loveable, and this line of La Fontaine's,

> 'Et la grace plus belle encore que la beauté,'
> [And grace more beauteous still than beauty's self,]

seems to have been made expressly for her. She had a fine complexion, an agreeable smile, blue eyes, with a look so tender, and at the same time so modest, that it awakened love and esteem simultaneously. Although possessed of little intellect, she never failed to cultivate it daily by continual reading. Without ambition, without vices, she was more occupied with thinking of him she loved, than with pleasing him. Wholly absorbed in herself and her passion—which was the sole one of her life—prizing reputation above all things, and exposing herself to the risk of death more than once, rather than allow her frailty to be suspected; sweet-tempered, liberal, timid, never forgetting that she had done ill, ever hoping to return to the paths of virtue, this Christian sentiment obtained for her the treasures of Divine mercy, by causing her to pass a large portion of her life amid the solid and even exquisite joys of an austere penitence. From the time of her own and the king's mutual attachment, she would never see her former friends, nor even hear speak of them; solely occupied with her passion, which supplied to her the place of all else. It was not that the king required of her this extreme seclusion; he was not formed

to be jealous—still less, to be deceived. But it was, that she wished constantly to see her lover, or to think of him, without being disturbed by indifferent persons."

This summary of her character wholly confirms our estimate of its exclusiveness and limited qualities. It shows her tenderness; but it demonstrates that she was neither large-minded nor large-hearted. It also offers another significant point of consideration—borne out by similar particulars in the foregoing account of La Vallière—as displaying the complaisance with which ecclesiastical dignitaries can extend leniency towards female error in the person of a king's mistress; the moderation they can afford in treating of a monarch's misdemeanours, and the chary terms in which they can dress a royal favourite's lapse from virtue. Extenuation and apology wait on court sin. A poor deluded peasant-girl would have been heaped with scorn and reprobation; while La Vallière is lauded as a specimen of excellence, and hailed as an interesting and edifying penitent. She has a palliative homily pronounced for her by a prospective bishop; her inaugural sermon is preached by one of France's most eminent prelates, an existing bishop; and her panegyric is written by a literary Abbé. Queens, princesses, and marchionesses, flock to admire her; a pattern-woman writes to her own daughter applauding her; while she herself is raised to be a duchess, and rises into a reputed saint. Verily, when female weakness is hardly dealt with in the person of lowly women, it might be as well to call to mind the story of La Vallière. Error springing from a too tender heart in those both indigent and ignorant, should find some forbearance, when the ultra-tenderness of La Vallière, rich, high-born, and educated, found such distinguished toleration.

MARIA THERESA.

Maria Theresa was an embodiment of executive regality. She had the promptitude, forethought, and vigilance of a detective officer; and discharged duty with the rigid precision of a policeman. She was essentially practical, and thoroughly industrious-minded. She was ready in an emergency, equal to a difficulty, and sturdy for order and regulation. She met reverses with boldness and fortitude, and used prosperity for instituting reforms. She was greatly remedial; remedying sudden mischances by encountering them firmly; and remedying existing evils with the strong hand of eradication.

She was daughter of Charles VI. of Austria, Emperor of Germany, and Elizabeth Christina, of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. In default of male issue, Charles VI. appointed that his daughter, Maria Theresa, should be heiress of all the Austrian dominions; and, consent to this appointment—entitled the Pragmatic Sanction—was obtained from the Diet of the empire, all the German princes, and several of the European powers.

At the age of nineteen, Maria Theresa married Francis, of Lorraine; who became Grand Duke of Tuscany the year after his nuptials; and accompanied by his consort, repaired to Florence. Upon her father's death, in 1740, Maria Theresa lost no time in

returning to Vienna, that she might assert her rights, and take possession of those dominions bequeathed as her inheritance. She had to maintain her patrimony against the various claimants that arose to dispute her succession: for the Elector of Bavaria, and of Saxony, the Kings of Spain, France, and Sardinia, each advanced pretensions to certain portions of the Austrian Monarchy, which they agreed to dismember, and divide among them in respective shares; while Frederick II. of Prussia, surnamed the Great, asserted that he was entitled to four Duchies in Silesia. Maria Theresa met all these claims with the resolution and energy that marked her character. She assumed immediate supremacy in Austria, Bohemia, and her other German states; and went straight to Presburg, took the constitutional oaths of Hungary, and caused herself to be proclaimed Queen of that kingdom. One of her first cares was to secure the joint nomination of her husband to all the crowns she inherited; conferring upon him the title of co-regent, while preserving to herself all the rights of sovereignty guaranteed by the Pragmatic Sanction. Meantime her enemies pressed forward. Frederick of Prussia's offer to befriend the young monarch, on condition of her yielding Silesia to him, having been at once rejected, he proceeded to invade that province; while the Elector of Bavaria, aided by France, marched upon Vienna, and forced Maria Theresa to retire from the capital. She repaired to Presburg, convoked the Hungarian Diet, and made personal appeal to them. Young, handsome, and spirited, she knew that the best method to secure the fealty of those assembled, was to arouse their chivalrous sentiment, and generous feeling: she therefore appeared among them, bearing her little son in her arms, and said, that assailed on all sides by foes, abandoned by her friends, and finding even her own relatives hostile to her, she had no hopes save in the loyalty of those she addressed; and that she had come

to place the daughter and the son of their king beneath their protection. The Hungarian nobles responded by an unanimous shout of enthusiastic allegiance. Their swords flew from the scabbards, as they exclaimed with one accord :—"Moriamur pro rege nostro, Maria Theresa!" ["Let us die for our king, Maria Theresa;"—the title of *king* being applied to the sovereign, whether male or female.] The address and the reply were both pronounced in Latin; Maria Theresa being mistress of that language, and all public acts in Hungary being in that tongue. The generous impulse of the Hungarians was followed up by their immediately putting the whole military force under arms, and preparing to defend their young queen's cause. They fought gallantly; and in conjunction with the troops she could muster, succeeded in driving back the French and Bavarians from Maria Theresa's hereditary states. Charles VI. had left but exhausted financial resources, with scantily-maintained soldiery; and his daughter's condition verified Prince Eugene's remark, that "an army of one hundred thousand men could better guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction than a hundred thousand treaties." So hemmed in was Maria Theresa by menacing hostilities from all quarters, that at one time, when expecting another child, she wrote to her mother-in-law, the Duchess of Lorraine :—"I hardly know whether I shall have a single town left me, where I can lye in." Her spirit and resolution never forsook her throughout the complicated difficulties of her position. The courage with which she met them, and the energy with which she extricated herself from them, enforced respect even from her opponents; while the multiplicity of disasters that threatened her, drew sympathy from surrounding nations. In England, the interest which her situation inspired, was such,—especially among the women there, that they determined to place at her disposal the sum of one hundred thousand pounds; selecting Marlborough's

widow, the Duchess Sarah, to be the medium of their offer. It was deeply felt by Maria Theresa; but she did not think herself justified in accepting it at a time when the parliament were voting subsidies for her defence.

Some of Maria Theresa's antagonists made peace with her; others became her allies; and in 1745 the Elector of Bavaria, who had been created Emperor of Germany, under the name of Charles VII. dying, Maria Theresa's husband was called to the throne, as Francis I. The war of the Austrian succession was carried on during three years longer; when the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, terminated the struggle, leaving Maria Theresa in full and undisturbed possession of all her hereditary dominions, with the exception of Silesia, which she had been compelled to yield to Frederick of Prussia.

No sooner did Maria Theresa find herself settled in peaceful security, than she prepared to carry out her systems of internal reform. The vestiges of war were effaced; agriculture was revived; commerce and the arts were encouraged; shipping interests were regarded; roads constructed and repaired; Vienna was enlarged and embellished; manufactories of woollen cloths, of porcelain, of glass, and silken stuffs, were established. Science flourished in the foundation of several universities and colleges; while one of them, still enjoying celebrity, bears its sovereign's name in gratitude to its foundress—"Collegium Theresianum." Special schools of drawing, painting, and architecture were instituted; while Prague and Inspruck had public libraries endowed. Observatories, enriched with valuable apparatus and instruments, arose in Vienna, in Gratz, and in Tirnau; Van Swieten was summoned to regenerate the study of medicine and surgery; and Metastasio was invited to help in disseminating a cultivation of the Italian muse on the banks of the Danube. Measures of import-

ance and magnitude were effected by Maria Theresa in the government of her people. She introduced great amelioration into the feudal system as it then existed in Bohemia; protecting the peasantry from the worst oppressions of their seigneurial superiors, and freeing them from personal services, which she commuted for a sum of money. She abolished the torture in her hereditary states in Hungary, and in Bohemia. Severe penalties were attached to literary piracy. She exerted herself to promote popular education throughout her dominions, establishing a general system, and taking means for its efficacious operation. She divided into three classes the schools she instituted:—firstly, "Normal Schools," one in each province, to serve as a model for all the other schools in the province; secondly, "Principal Schools," in the large towns; and thirdly, "Commercial Schools," in the smaller towns and villages. The normal schools were superintended by a director: those of the large towns were under the superintendence of a magistrate; and the commercial schools, under that of a parish priest, or an assessor of the communal council. A central commission of studies was likewise appointed for general supervision of the whole, receiving annual reports, and examining candidates for masterships. Maria Theresa's practical mind, moreover, suggested that nominal labour should be added to intellectual culture in the instruction given at the communal schools. She granted extra emolument to those teachers whose wives taught the girls sewing, knitting, and spinning; so that, children thus taught, were able to earn a daily addition to the family income. The system worked admirably; and formed the basis of that extended popular education which operates so beneficially throughout the Austrian monarchy. It was as if the ear of prescience had conveyed to Maria Theresa the import of Wordsworth's noble aspiration for a national education.

" O for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this imperial Realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
Them who are born to serve her and obey;
Binding herself by statute to secure
For all the children whom her soil maintains,
The rudiments of letters, and inform
The mind with moral and religious truth,
Both understood and practis'd—so that none,
However destitute, be left to droop
By timely culture unsustained; or run
Into a wild disorder; or be forc'd
To drudge through a weary life without the help
Of intellectual implements and tools;
A savage horde among the civiliz'd,
A servile band among the lordly free!
This sacred right the lisping babe proclaims
To be inherent in him by Heaven's will,
For the protection of his innocence;
And the rude boy—who having overpass'd
The sinless age, by conscience is enroll'd,
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech
To impious use—by process indirect
Declares his due, while he makes known his need.
This sacred right is fruitlessly announc'd,
This universal plea in vain addressed,
To eyes and ears of parents who themselves
Did, in the time of their necessity,
Urge it in vain; and therefore, like a prayer
That from the humblest floor ascends to Heaven,
It mounts to reach the state's parental ear;
Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,
And be not most unfeelingly devoid
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
The unquestionable good."

The active benefactions of Maria Theresa embraced all classes

of her subjects. The infirm, or wounded soldiery, until then suffered to remain exposed to neglect, were received into large hospitals; while the widows of officers, and young ladies of decayed families, found refuge in asylums provided by humanity and piety. With such a neighbour as Frederick of Prussia, Maria Theresa could not but feel her period of peace to be a kind of armed repose: she therefore maintained numerous troops, keeping them constantly exercised and disciplined; and she founded military academies at Vienna, Neustadt, and Antwerp.

Maria Theresa was a pious Catholic; but she yielded no implicit subservience to the court of Rome, and preserved strict discrimination between spiritual and temporal jurisdictions. She maintained as a principle that all things, not of divine institution, were subject to the supreme legislative authority of the state; and reserved to the crown the right of executing several momentous reforms. She effected some of these in the temporalities of the clergy; and ordered all clerical property to be registered. She suppressed the pensions charged at Rome upon benefices; and forbade the alienation of property in favour of ecclesiastical bodies. She entrusted the spiritual rule of convents to the respective bishops, and placed their secular affairs under the controul of the civil magistrates. She restricted the arbitrary power of the Inquisition, then existing in her Italian dominions; and withdrew from its hands the censorship of books, which she transferred to a commission of civil magistrates appointed for that purpose. In Tuscany, where government was administered by a council of regency in the name of her second son, Leopold, she directed that lay assessors should be conjoined with the inquisitors in the prosecution of all suits for heresy. The check she put upon the irresponsible and despotic operations of the Inquisition, led to its final abolishment in Lombardy and Tuscany at a subsequent period.

Maria Theresa was a woman of the strictest morality. She was immaculately virtuous herself; and she exercised severe discipline over the morals of her subjects. One of her acts recalls a point in Shakespeare's play of "Measure for Measure;" which, by the way, evinces the poet's extraordinary knowledge of local circumstances, and shows that in his time houses of ill-fame existed on the same spot, as a Viennese public nuisance, which, at a later period, was cleansed by Maria Theresa's command. She suppressed the suburban taverns of Vienna, and endeavoured to clear her realms of impurity and vice, by exterminating haunts of profligacy, and by condemning their tenants to perpetual banishment. Swarms of female delinquents were conveyed down the Danube to manufactories established at Teneswar or Waradine, where they were sentenced to hard labour. She carried her guardianship of public morals even into interference with the domestic arrangements of her nobility; for, if she discovered that a married nobleman so far forgot his conjugal duties as to court the smiles of an opera dancer, or other frail celebrity, Maria Theresa sent her lieutenant of police on a visit to the obnoxious personage, who, without farther ceremony, was ordered to take her departure from the Imperial city within twenty-four hours. The noted Signora Gabrielli was thus summarily dismissed to her native city of Naples, upon the empress's coming to the knowledge of the favours which this syren of song and gallantry conferred upon one of the noblemen in her imperial Majesty's court. Rigorous etiquette was a feature in Maria Theresa's household; her own august inflexibility both setting the example, and enforcing the observance of a staid decorum the most absolute.

It must have cost the austere propriety of Maria Theresa no slight effort, when she penned that letter to the meretricious favourite of Louis XV., addressing Madame de Pompadour as "Ma

chère amie!" The necessity must have been stringent which could urge the imperial hand to trace such words as a form of address to such a woman. But Maria Theresa was not one to hesitate when a point was to be gained. That she calculated justly in believing that her condescension would have its desired effect, was proved by the event. Prince Kaunitz, who possessed the entire confidence of the empress, had been despatched by Maria Theresa, embassador to the court of Versailles, with a view to inducing the French king to enter into friendly alliance with Austria. For some time the royal favourite exercised her influence to prevent Louis XV. from listening to the embassador's proposals;—but when imperial prude-punctilio yielded to imperial policy, and a letter came from Maria Theresa to herself, beginning "*Ma chère amie*," Pompadour's self-love was so agreeably flattered, that she used her utmost efforts to obtain the king's acquiescence with the empress's wishes; and France, long inimical to her claims upon the Austrian succession, became one of Maria Theresa's most powerful supporters.

It was in memory of the success which crowned her arms at the battle of Kollin, when victory was obtained under Marshal Daun, that Maria Theresa instituted the military order which bears her name: and the peace of Hubertsbourg, on the 15th February, 1763, terminated the seven years' war, which Frederick the Great waged against the combined forces of Russia, France, and Austria. It ended, leaving Austria with the same boundary of dominion as at its commencement. It is strange that the small amount of substantial alteration effected by war, seems never to teach mankind any lesson; they still pertinaciously continue to expend millions of wealth, shed rivers of blood, and destroy multitudes of homes, in this fatal game—a game wherein all parties are losers.

In the year 1765, the Emperor Francis I. died; and Maria The-

resa lost a husband to whom she was strongly attached. She wore mourning for him until the period of her own decease; and visited monthly the imperial mausoleum where his ashes reposed. Haunted with images of death, she caused her own coffin to be made, and sewed her shroud herself. In these very grave-clothes—made secretly by her own hand—it is said she was ultimately buried. But while in private dedicating her thoughts to funereal reflection, she still gave her attention to political interests and public duties. The dazzling successes of a woman who, like herself, occupied an imperial throne with extraordinary pomp and brilliancy, excited her notice, and drew forth her energies into their wonted activity. Catherine II. bore so hard upon Turkey by her force of arms, that Maria Theresa hastened to declare her intention of making common cause with the Ottomans, if the Russian troops crossed the Danube. A convention had even been already signed between Austria and the Sublime Porte at Constantinople, in 1771. But on a sudden, a mutual understanding was visibly taking place between the two empresses; and Europe was far from conjecturing its cause. It was only at the end of a twelvemonth that the dismemberment of Poland, concerted between the courts of Petersburg, Berlin, and Vienna, was made public by acts of taking possession, and by manifestos. Maria Theresa's participation in the iniquitous deed of the partition of Poland rests a blot upon the policy of her reign. She has been rescued from the charge of having originated the plan; since the document of the secret convention, signed at St. Petersburg on the 17th February, 1772, exists to prove the contrary; wherein it is stated that if the court of Austria refuse consent to the plan of partition, Prussia and Russia will combine against her. This presented to Maria Theresa a perplexing dilemma. She had to abandon Turkey to its fate; and, moreover, to risk a rupture with France, whose direct interest it was to support

Poland. She sounded the court of Versailles; and its hesitation deciding her, she agreed to the dismemberment and partition in question. Her allotted share was sumptuous; among other acquisitions were the lucrative salt districts of Wielitzka, Bochnia, and Sambor. Amid the general outcry that arose in Europe against the crowned spoliators, Frederick the Great slily observed:—"As for me, I fully expected all this uproar of blame; but what will they say of her saintship, my cousin?" His cousin of Austria, the righteous Maria Theresa, was not a woman to care for popular disapprobation, when she had satisfactorily achieved a purpose, or gained an advantage. She acted on the principle, "faites bien, et laissez dire;" especially when the "faites bien" could be interpreted in the large and double sense of the phrase rendered into English, "do well." Thus considered, Maria Theresa was perfectly content to "do well, and let them talk."

On the death of her husband, Francis I., their son was elected emperor, as Joseph II.: but Maria Theresa continued to hold the reins of government; using the power she retained, for the beneficial rule of her subjects. She exercised firm sway, and carried her authority to the verge of hardness. She was an imperial martinet. Whatever she deemed right, was to be done at all hazards; whatever she judged expedient, was to be fulfilled, without demur, and at any cost. An incident is related of her despotic decree in a matter where she had willed obedience, which led to the sacrifice of one of her own children. Her young daughter, the archduchess Maria Josepha, had been espoused by proxy to the king of the two Sicilies; and previously to the bride's departure for Naples, the empress-mother insisted that she should visit the imperial sepulchre, and perform her orisons on the tomb of her departed ancestors. A beloved sister had been lately laid there, a victim to the ravages of that fearful disease, malignant small-

pox; and the young princess suffered invincible terror at the thought of repairing to this gloomy spot. She threw herself on her knees, entreated to be spared this shock, pleaded the dread she entertained lest her vivid recollection of the horrors she had lately witnessed in the death of her sister from the awful malady, and her own fear of infection, might lead to fatal consequences:—but all in vain. Maria Theresa's fiat had gone forth; and her will must be obeyed. The poor girl's alarm was but too well founded; and whether from this very pre-conceived and pre-disposing fright, or whether from other causes, the bride-queen sickened and died a short time after her enforced descent into the imperial vaults in submission to her mother's command. Maria Theresa's sternness of discipline in exacting the fulfilment of a religious observance, and what she deemed an act of duty, sufficiently explains the motive of this cruel inexorability: but there are not wanting those, who impute the empress's tyrannous conduct towards the young Maria Josepha, to the fact of her being the only one of Maria Theresa's daughters whom she could not hope to make the medium of arriving at knowledge useful to her in her course of foreign policy. It was believed that the spirit of intrigue and manœuvre belonging to diplomacy, caused Maria Theresa to make the alliances of her beautiful daughters, the young arch-duchesses, with various crowned heads, a means of getting at the secret councils of the several cabinets in Europe; and Maria Josepha was supposed to have shown symptoms that she would not prove equally tractable in revealing her consort's secrets. However, the fate of Marie Antoinette, and that of Maria Carolina, who subsequently became queen of Naples, in place of the deceased Maria Josepha, make it doubtful whether the gentle girl who died in her youth, had not, after all, a better destiny than her sisters. The tragical end of Marie Antoinette, and the career of turmoil, conflict, and peril that

attended Maria Carolina to the close of life, makes the early death of the young creature who evinced sufficient moral principle to render her betrayal of her future husband's confidence a matter of doubt, appear blessed in comparison.

In Belgium, Maria Theresa was regarded with esteem and veneration; and her subjects there proved their attachment, by the readiness with which they advanced the loans required by her in the prosecution of the seven years' war.

Her adminstration of government in Lombardy was conducted with energy and efficiency. Her minister, Count Firmian, carried out his imperial mistress's views with judicious exactitude. Maria Theresa gave orders for a new "censimento," or valuation of estates, for the purpose of equitably assessing the land-tax; she caused to be made the "bilancio camerale," or regular budget of the public revenue; she put a stop to a custom that had obtained of farming out the various branches of the indirect duties to the highest bidder; she made regulations to protect the peasantry against the oppression of their feudal superiors, and established representative communal council to superintend the local expenditure: in short, she began and made considerable progress in effecting that great legislative and administrative reform which afterwards gained ground under her son and successor, Joseph II. The encouragement which her minister, Count Firmian, gave to men of letters, protecting them against the cabals of their enemies, and conferring honourable offices upon themselves, reflected credit upon the imperial mistress in whose name he acted. Carli was constituted president of the council of commerce; Beccaria was appointed professor of political philosophy; and Pietro Verri was made counsellor and president of the board of finance: while the wisdom and judgment of these able men were turned to state ad-

vantage, by their suggestions and advice being sought, heard, and adopted.

During Maria Theresa's sway, the "naviglio," or navigable canal of Paderno, which joins the Adda to the Martesana, was executed. At the period of her coming into peaceable possession of Lombardy, in 1749, the duchy of Milan numbered nine hundred thousand inhabitants; and in 1770 the population had increased to the amount of a million one hundred and thirty thousand. Bossi, in his "Storia d'Italia," bears testimony to the merits of Maria Theresa's government there, when he says:—"Lombardy had never enjoyed so much happiness and tranquillity as under her reign:—it is recorded to her praise, that she desired to be informed of every act of the administration; that she afforded the poor and humble, as well as the noble and rich, free access to her presence; that she listened benignantly to all, either granting their petitions, or, if she denied them, giving reasons for her refusal, without delusive promises, or vague evasions. Just before her death, she declared that if any thing reprehensible had been done in her name, it was certainly without her knowledge, as she had always desired the welfare of her subjects. During a forty years' reign, she invariably showed a love of justice and truth; and she stated, as a principle of her conduct, that it is only the pleasure of alleviating distress and doing good to the people that can render the weight of a crown supportable to the wearer."

Maria Theresa gloried in the character of a benefactor;—she liked to bestow. She preferred that all advantages should flow from her immediate gift, rather than that they should be obtained by independent exertion. This is precisely the bias of character which renders a sovereign in what is called a "paternal government," valuable to his or her subjects. Possessing this inclination

to confer benefit, unrestricted power in a monarch is advantageous; but human beings, with their fallible and imperfect natures, are rarely so firm and constant in good intention as to be safely entrusted with limitless and irresponsible sway. Maria Theresa gained the title of "Mother of her people;" and she deserved it, by her benevolent solicitude for their interest; at the same time, it cannot be doubted that a queen like Isabella of Castile, who considered public opinion, popular feeling, and even national prejudice in acting for her subjects, was a nobler sovereign than the Empress Maria Theresa, who consulted chiefly her own views and judgment in what she decreed for the benefit of those she ruled. Some of the anecdotes recorded by her biographers as proof of her inexhaustible charity and goodness of heart, confirm the impression of that self-emanation which is to be traced in all her conduct. She seemed as if she wished every benefit to her subjects could proceed directly from her own hand,—that she could confer advantage by a nod; or shower blessings upon them at a breath. One of these related incidents not only illustrates this view of her character, but it tends to exhibit its haughty belief in its own right to dispense advantage proportionately with its desire to do so. Her imperial majesty's will to do good, challenges equality with Divine ordination; and claims the power to relieve distress in emulation of Omnipotence:—thus curiously arrogant in their fancied humility, are these austerely strict personages apt to be. This is the anecdote in question:—one day, having perceived in the vicinity of her palace, a poor woman and two children, starving for want of food, she exclaimed in a tone of the deepest grief:—"Alas! what have I done to Providence, that such a fearful spectacle should afflict my sight, and disgrace my reign?" And thereupon she gave orders that the unfortunate mother should be served with viands from her own table; caused

her to be brought into her presence, questioned her, and assigned her a pension from her own private funds.

The sacrifice of personal ease which Maria Theresa was ever ready to make in the discharge of her duty, the scrupulous exactness with which she fulfilled the various demands of her high station, the unblemished virtue of her own life, command the highest respect. She had been heard to say:—"I reproach myself with the time I spend in sleep, as so much robbed from my people."

Frederick the Great, although politically her foe, entertained esteem for Maria Theresa's character, and manifested concern when he heard of her death. What he wrote to D'Alembert relative to her, testifies the sentiments with which he regarded his imperial kinswoman. He said, that "although he had made war against her, he had never been her personal enemy; that he had always respected her, and that she was an honour to her sex, and the glory of her throne."

A contest for the succession of Bavaria, to which Joseph II. had induced his imperial mother to lay claim, was brought to a close by the mediation of France and Russia, and resulted in what Frederick of Prussia called "a war of the pen." Austria was compelled to renounce its pretension, and the peace of Teschen, in 1779, which terminated the affair, was the last political act of Maria Theresa.

She expired at the age of sixty-three, on the 29th of November, 1780, leaving eight children; among whom the most remarkable are the Emperors Joseph II. and Leopold II.; the Queen of Naples, Maria Carolina, and the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette.

With Maria Theresa the house of Austria-Hapsburg ceased; and the present dynasty of Austria-Lorraine commenced.

Possessed of great beauty, and a fine person, the dignity of this

regal woman's manner set off her high rank, and gave effect to her distinguished mental qualities.

Maria Theresa was one of those energetic, active-thoughted women, whose peculiar characteristics co-exist with the very reverse of a voluptuous temperament. She had none of the weaknesses incident to impassioned or sensuous natures; but at the same time she had few of the generous impulses or warm emotions which belong to more ardent spirits. She was exempted by her own inherent disposition from falling into error; and the model of virtue that she presented both in her public and her private conduct, was a constitutional merit.

Maria Theresa forms a striking picture of an Imperial Woman of Business.

CATHERINE II. OF RUSSIA.

This sovereign may be cited as a notorious example of female coarseness. She was essentially a woman of gross appetites. Her ambition was gross;—it sickened at no deed however violent, however unscrupulous, to secure its object. Her love of glory was gross;—it strove at achieving showy and ostentations acts, rather than beneficial ones for her people. Her love of fame was gross;—condescending to court applause, and cajole into flattering representation those who she thought would be the chroniclers of her reign. Her love, as regarded the affections, was gross—since it consisted in the most sensual and undisguised preference for those men distinguished by merely handsome persons: and her love of the table was only not gross, because her vanity led her to guard against the ill effects which excess in eating and drinking would have upon her good looks. She was a kind of female Henry the Eighth. Like him, not without talent—even great talent; but combined with so large a preponderance of animal propensity, as to make the intellectual become merged in the physical nature. The nearest approach to an excuse for her private conduct, is, that in reading the history of her Russian predecessors, we perceive Catherine's mode of life to be no worse than the usual course pursued by these semi-barbarians; where swinish indulgence went

hand in hand with cost and luxury; where the only idea of refinement was expense and profusion; where wallowing in all kinds of debauchery was held to be the height of regal privilege; and where a monarch surnamed "the great," used to chastise those who offended him with blows, and administered corporeal punishment to culprits with his own royal hand, striking off their heads or inflicting the knout, as the case might be, instead of the headsman or common executioner. He not only struck with his fist courtiers, generals, and ministers, who committed slight faults; but when the Archbishop of Novogorod, the primate of Russia, crossed his will on one occasion, he brought him to obedience, by the means he used to any of his subjects who displeased him—by a shower of blows from a stick.

The Empress Elizabeth, daughter to Peter I. and sister to Peter II., named as her successor to the throne of Russia, her nephew, the young Duke of Holstein Gottorp, who afterwards reigned as Peter III. His imperial aunt chose him a consort in the person of Sophia Augusta von Anhalt, a princess possessed of youth and prettiness sufficient to attract the liking of the imperial heir; and after changing her name to that of Catherina Alexiewna on adopting the Greek form of faith, the marriage was decided upon. Catherine was about one year younger than her appointed husband; born at Stettin, on the 25th of April, 1729. She was sixteen years of age when married to the Grand-duke of Russia. But before the nuptials were solemnized, the intended bridegroom was attacked by a violent fever, which terminated in malignant small-pox; and when he recovered from the malady, it had so altered and disfigured him, that he was hardly recognizable. Catherine's mother, the Princess of Zerbst-Anhalt, an intriguing and aspiring woman, used her utmost efforts to prepare her daughter for the change in her lover's appearance; and this precaution not

only enabled Catherine to controul any evidence of disgust, but inspired her with sufficient courage and dissimulation to run towards him and express her joy, on first seeing him after his restoration to health. Courage and dissimulation formed a part of Catherine's character. She never wanted for boldness in emergency, or for power of concealing her real feelings under an appearance of ease and cheerfulness. On the present occasion, her feigned delight cost her so great an effort, that on reaching her own apartment after the interview, she fell down in a swoon that lasted three hours, ere she recovered from her state of insensibility.

But on regaining her senses, they returned to her in their usual condition of sharp greed and blunted delicacy. She mastered her disinclination for the present husband, by the strength of her inclination for the future emperor, and the marriage was celebrated. From such a beginning, what could ensue but unhappy wedlock?—mutual indifference; mutual neglect; mutual aversion. He, ill-educated, ill-mannered, and of intemperate habits, spent his time in drinking and revelry with boon companions: she, sprightly, well-informed, speaking several languages with facility and elegance, fond of company, amusement, and pleasure: he, ashamed and vexed at his wife's superiority of intelligence; she, vexed and ashamed of her husband's inferiority to herself. In a court like that in which the young couple lived, there were not wanting those who found their own interests in fomenting the mutual disagreement between the Grand-duke and Grand-duchess, and in representing it disadvantageously to the Empress-aunt; while even those who were swayed by honester motives, and ventured to remonstrate with Elizabeth on the ignorance and want of culture in which the heir to her throne was suffered to remain, were defeated in their attempts to effect improvement. Not only did the Grand-duke's own want of mental capacity with degraded tastes and hab-

its militate against his advancement, but the empress felt that strange mixture of kindliness and jealousy which is frequently visible in reigning sovereigns towards their appointed heirs. It is said that one of these honester persons about the court (a privileged tire-woman of the empress) dared to express her wonder that her imperial mistress should not allow the Grand-duke to attend the council-board, saying:—"If you do not let him learn any thing of that which he ought to know in order to govern, what do you think will become of him, and what will become of the empire?" The empress made no other reply than by fixing her eyes angrily upon the speaker, with the words:—"Johanna, do you know where *Siberia* is?"

But for one generous partizan, there were scores of insidious enemies, who asked no better than the opportunities afforded by his own misconduct for injuring the Grand-duke in the opinion of his imperial aunt, and leading his young wife into retaliation of neglect and infidelity. They magnified his faults in repeating them to the empress; they took advantage of his indifference towards Catherine to seduce her from him. The grand-chancellor, Bestucheff, was his chief enemy, politically, and strove to destroy his favour with Elizabeth; while his chamberlain, Soltikoff, found means to supplant him in the good graces of Catherine. The empress had bestowed on her nephew, on the occasion of his marriage, a small palace with pleasure-grounds, called Oranienbaum; and here the Grand-duke and Duchess held their little court. Here it was, that in idleness, and the evils that grow out of idleness, the Grand-duke lounged away his time; and here it was, that partly instigated by the intriguing spirit of a vicious and unscrupulous mother, and partly inspired by natural inclination, the Grand-duchess began her career of gallantry and political manœuvre, pleasure, and ambitious plotting, that eventually flourished in such rampant

growth. The Princess of Zerbst-Anhalt instilled into her daughter precepts of circumspection and caution; and set her the example of joining craft with licence. Having awakened suspicion by her trickery and diplomacy, she was watched; her movements narrowly observed: she had, therefore, some difficulty in conveying her communications to those with whom she was in correspondence, surrounded as she was by vigilant espial. Being at one of the court balls at Oranienbaum, and desiring to get a letter transmitted to her brother the King of Sweden, the princess, with her daughter, the Grand-duchess, approached Lestocq, who was a confidential emissary; and, as he stood conversing with a circle of ladies, the Grand-duchess threw him her glove, saying she would dance with him. Lestocq perceived that it held a paper, and said with a ready smile:—"I accept your challenge, madam; but instead of returning you your glove, favour me with its fellow, that I may present them both to my wife; and then your gracious present will be complete;"—and, securing the gloves within his vest, the moment the dance was concluded, the adroit courtier quitted the ball-room, lest the empress should have him searched before he could retire.

Such was the school of intrigue in which Catherine graduated; an apt pupil, she became an accomplished proficient in the art, and eventually excelled the maternal mistress under whose professorship she took her degrees. The Princess of Zerbst, soon after this, received an imperial order to leave Russia; but the seed of her instructions remained behind to reach maturity in the after-conduct of her daughter, the Grand-duchess.

Catherine beheld her mother depart with regret; but speedily a round of entertainments given at Oranienbaum, by the contrivance of the young chamberlain, Soltikoff, who suggested them to the Grand-duke for the behoof of the Grand-duchess, effaced

all thoughts but those of gaiety, gallantry, and more deep designs beneath the semblance of frivolous pastime and festive amusement.

The birth of a son (who afterwards reigned as Paul I.) brought little change of sedateness or higher moral feeling to Catherine. She cared no more for her husband now than she had ever done; and when the empress's eyes were opened to the scandal of the Grand-duchess's too great favour to Soltikoff, and that Elizabeth had sent him on an embassage to remove him from Russia, Catherine replaced her first lover by a second, Count Poniatowsky. The chancellor, Bestucheff, who had been a main agent in effecting the removal of Soltikoff, lost no opportunity of conciliating the good graces of the Grand-duchess, by favoring her partiality for Poniatowsky; and he prosecuted his schemes against the Grand-duke, by strengthening the party which was gradually forming itself in secret around the Grand-duchess, and making her interests its centre; but a counter-cabal was plotted against Bestucheff, which ended in his disgrace, and the appointment of Count Woronzoff to succeed him in his office of chancellor. The picture of court-cabals and court-intrigues in this Russian history, is deplorable,—and revolting as deplorable;—but it affords a striking instance of the unenviable life passed amid such scenes. While one party schemed to undermine the Grand-duke in the favour of the empress, another vied in ministering to his low pleasures; and he himself passed his hours in aping Frederick the Great, dressing up the soldiers in the Prussian uniform, mimicing the look, tone, and manners of his military idol; and in the midst of his drunken rant, vowing that he would one day conquer the whole North, and imitate the great Frederick in the minutest particular himself, while making all his subjects follow in the same track. One of those who most vilely flattered the Grand-duke's coarse tastes, and shared in his boisterous orgies, was Romanowna Woronzoff, sister to the chancellor who

had succeeded Bestucheff; while the Princess Daschkoff, another of Woronzoff's sisters, attached herself to the party of the Grand-duchess,—planning pastimes, and hatching designs, with equal zeal and vivacity. Meantime, the empress, Elizabeth, was rapidly declining in health; but, with her natural indolence joined to her loathsome habits of excess, she neglected state affairs, and thought only of balls, feasts, masquerades, and theatres, eating and drinking, and sleeping off the effects of her intemperance. When her illness could no longer be mistaken, and her danger became imminent, her death-bed was made a scene of indecent party-influence, and hollow mockery of the nearest relationships. The confessor of the empress was biassed by Count Panino, tutor of the young Prince Paul, to induce the dying woman to affect a reconciliation with her nephew and his wife, in order that the interests of the boy-heir might not be prejudiced: a profession of esteem and attachment was therefore dictated by these intriguers, and uttered by Elizabeth in favour of two people kneeling by her bedside as she lay there dying, whom she had long held in contempt and dislike. A lie of monstrous and glaring flagrancy, put into the mouth of an expiring sovereign by her spiritual director at the instigation of a self-seeking courtier, in presence of conniving attendants, and addressed to hypocritical mourners!—a more abhorrent picture of court depravity could hardly be adduced. A biographer of this empress, Elizabeth, sums up her character in these pithy words:—"Her devotions often rendered her impious, and her clemency cruel." He adds in illustration, that "she had made a vow not to permit any sentence of death to be executed during her reign; and the judges, therefore, who could not have criminals beheaded, caused them to perish by the barbarous torture of the knout. Moreover, never were there more tongues cut out, or more wretches exiled to Siberia, than beneath the sway of this princess, so unworthily sur-

named, 'the clement.' Two anecdotes suffice to characterize her. Observing that one of the court-ladies assisting at her toilette was in pain, she asked her the reason: 'My legs are much swelled,' answered the lady. 'Well, then,' replied Elizabeth, 'lean against that bureau, and I will pretend not to see you.' She never permitted the ladies of the court to wear the same fashions and materials as herself; to adopt them they must wait until she had done with them. It is true, indeed, that she changed them frequently; for at her death, were found in her wardrobe thirty thousand dresses."

On the demise of the Empress Elizabeth, the Grand-duke ascended the throne as Peter III., and at first showed very differently in his new character of emperor from what he had done as heir to the crown. He showed himself just, forbearing, and benevolent. He treated his wife with consideration and respect; he behaved with generosity to those who had been friendly to his cause, and with almost magnanimity towards those who had been inimical to him. He recalled from Siberia several of those who had been tyrannously banished thither; and the people, in consequence of these auspicious omens, hailed with enthusiasm this earnest of excellence in their new ruler. But this fit of good conduct was as transient as it was sudden: he fell back into his old habits;—he ceased to treat his wife with decent regard; he passed his days in debauchery with his riotous companions, paid public attentions to Romanowna, Countess of Woronzoff, while openly slighting Catherine; played off his absurd baboonery of Frederick the Great; and lastly,—to crown his delinquencies in the eyes of his subjects,—he made no secret of preferring the Lutheran to the Greek church. He lost his popularity in proportion as he thus affronted the predilections of his subjects;—he even went so far as to risk offending them, by devising a plan to repudiate his wife Catherine; declaring her son, Prince Paul, to be illegitimate; and,

after effecting the divorce and disgrace of the mother, creating his mistress, Romanowna, empress in her stead. His only demur to the scheme was, as to whom he should appoint for his successor in lieu of the young prince, Paul. When the previous empress, Elizabeth, had been placed on the throne of Russia, Ivan, son to a niece of the empress, Anne, had been deprived of his appointed inheritance to make way for Elizabeth's accession: since when, this unfortunate prince had languished in a prison-dungeon. Peter III. thought of Ivan for his successor; he determined, therefore, to repair to the fortress of Schlusselburg; where, in a secret interview, unannounced and unknown, he might judge of the prisoner's fitness for the post to which he destined him. This melo-dramatic interview actually took place; and the Prince Ivan's behaviour was such as to afford no reason that should induce the emperor to alter his intentions with regard to him; nevertheless, he took no active steps to fulfil them,—having neither the mental resources, nor the courage for carrying out such an enterprise against a woman of such talent as he knew his wife to possess.

But although these intentions of Peter III. were neither executed nor known in their full extent to Catherine, their scope was sufficiently suspected to render her eager to frame some plan by which she might take advantage of the animosity they would generate against her husband, and the interest they would inspire towards herself and son, so as to effect a decided movement in her favour. Living retired at the palace of Peterhof, she had leisure not only to devise schemes and conspiracies, but to replace Poniatowsky by a new favourite,—Gregory Orloff. This young officer was not only a gallant peculiarly suited to the taste of the imperial she-libertine, but he was a valuable confederate in the plot that Catherine was now designing in combination with the Princess Daschkoff; whose spirit of intrigue and general cleverness render-

ed her a most active assistant in the secret project for dethroning Peter III., and causing Catherine to be constituted empress in his stead. Under pretence of literary pursuits, and other elegant amusements enjoyed together in the retirement of Peterhof, and in correspondence by letter, when the princess occasionally repaired to Petersburg in order the more effectually to prosecute their concerted plans, Catherine and this lady carried on the conspiracy, aided by Orloff and his brothers; with Bibikoff, Odart, Panino, Razoumoffsky, Wolkousky, the Archbishop of Novogorod, Gleboff, and others; and only waited for a favourable opportunity to put their designs in execution. The members of the confederacy differed in their several views respecting the plot in its ultimate result, as they did in the measures most advisable for its carrying out. Catherine, and a few of her more devoted partizans, were for placing her on the throne as empress: others,—Panino chiefly,—were for appointing her regent during the minority of her son, Prince Paul. With regard to the manner of conducting the revolt, there were also differing opinions: some were for awaiting the celebration of the festival of St. Peter at the Palace of Peterhof, which always occasioned a vast assemblage of maskers and revellers there: and the emperor's person might be secured during one of the orgies sure to form part of the entertainment when he arrived. Others counselled more direct and open violence. Lieutenant Passeck,—a ferocious soldier and savage,—proposed stabbing him in the midst of his court; and he stationed himself with one of his comrades in ambuscade during two whole days, with the intention of surprising the czar as he passed; but it so chanced that Peter did not come as expected. By means of Orloff and his brothers, some regiments of the troops were gained over; and through the medium of a borrowed sum of money, Catherine bought over other

of the soldiery, seeing that it was greatly essential that the military should be on her side when the outbreak came.

In the mean time, the czar was preparing, on his part, a scheme which only awaited the celebration of the festival of his namesake saint for execution. He intended an expedition against Denmark, for which the Russian fleet was equipped and lay ready, partly at Cronstadt, partly at Revel; while the regiments that were to accompany him by land, were already assembling in Pomerania. The invasion of Holstein was one of his objects; and a visit to his idol and model, the King of Prussia, formed a scarcely less important one. During his absence, the arrest of Catherine was to take place, as the first step to her repudiation; but she trusted that she might anticipate him in this plan, by her own. All now wanting, was opportunity, and that was not slow in presenting itself. An inadvertence at Petersburg, had nearly occasioned the discovery there of the conspiracy that was brewing; and this incident hastened its crisis. On the Princess Daschkoff's learning from one of her spies what had chanced, she dressed herself in men's clothes, went out to meet the chief conspirators, decided with them that it was best not to wait till morning, but to take advantage of the silence and darkness of the night then setting in:—while, therefore, Gregory Orloff and Bibikoff went to the barracks to prepare the soldiers to act at the first given signal, Alexius Orloff undertook to bring Catherine from Peterhof.

Under pretext of leaving the principal apartments free for the approaching festival to be held here; but, in fact, to be the better ready for getting away, Catherine had established herself in a small summer-house, situated at the extremity of the garden-grounds, on the banks of the gulf of Finland; where a small vessel lay at hand, serving for clandestine visits from her gallants, and

for means of escape to Sweden, should the conspiracy be discovered. It is said, (and the anecdote is related as having been told by herself,) that happening to walk through these grounds on the eve of the insurrection, Catherine perceived a seedling oak growing there, and being struck by thus meeting with a species of tree somewhat rare in that country, she had it enclosed and preserved. Subsequently, growing into a fine tree, Catherine took pleasure in regarding it as an emblem of her reign.

Alexius Orloff had been supplied by his brother Gregory with the key of the summer-house, and with instruction how to find his way to the spot; while the Princess Daschkoff had given him a note, urging the empress to accompany him, without delay, to Petersburg.

It was two hours past midnight;—the empress expecting no farther intelligence, had retired to rest, and was fast asleep, when she felt herself abruptly aroused, and saw standing by her bed a soldier whom she did not recognize, who said hastily:—"Your majesty has not a moment to lose; be pleased to be prepared to go with me,"—and hurried out. Catherine, bewildered, called to her confidential attendant, Iwanowna, who assisted her mistress to rise and dress; and both disguised themselves so as to pass the sentinels without being recognized. They were no sooner thus equipped, than the soldier, re-entering, conducted them to a coach that the Princess Daschkoff had kept in waiting for some days at a place not far distant. For some time all went well; but about half way, the horses being worn out, stopped short. The empress descended from the coach, expressing her readiness to proceed on foot; but, fortunately, they overtook a peasant's cart; and in this, exhausted with fatigue and anxiety, but sufficiently mistress of herself to assume an air of composure, and even cheerfulness, Catherine arrived in the capital at seven o'clock in the morning.

She went straight to the soldiers' quarters, where those regiments already gained over, were stationed; but whom the conspirators had not permitted to turn out until her appearance, lest any act of precipitancy should cause failure. On the report of her arrival, some score of half-dressed guards ran out and received her with shouts of joy. Surprised and alarmed to see so small a number of the soldiery, she was silent for a few moments, but recovering herself, she told them that immiuent peril had forced her to come and seek their help: that the czar intended that very night to kill her and her son; that she had only avoided death by flight, and that she trusted sufficiently to their good will, to place herself in their hands." Those who heard her flamed with indignation, and swore to die in her defence. Their example, and that of their colonel, Razoumoffsky, soon incited the rest of the soldiery, who now poured in crowds round Catherine; and they all with one voice proclaimed her for their sovereign. The chaplain of the regiment was summoned; and he received, upon a crucifix, the oath of allegiance from the troops. Some few voices amid the tumult proclaimed Catherine regent; but they were soon quelled by the menaces of Orloff, and drowned by the more numerous cries of "Long live the Empress!"

A couple of hours' time sufficed to see Catherine surrounded by two thousand of the military, and a large portion of the populace of St. Petersburg, who mechanically followed the movements of the soldiery. This numerous concourse escorted her through the streets,—where the windows and door-ways were thronged with spectators, mingling their welcoming acclamations with the shouts of the soldiers,—to the church; and there the archbishop of Novogorod, attired in his sacerdotal robes, and attended by a large body of the priesthood,—their long beards and flowing white hair in picturesque contrast with the assembled multitude,—

awaited her at the altar. The primate placed the imperial crown upon her head, and, with a loud voice, proclaimed her sovereign of all the Russias, under the name of Catherine II.; at the same time declaring the young Grand-duke, Paul, as her successor. Te Deum was then chanted, accompanied by the applauses of the multitude. After this ceremony, the empress repaired to the palace formerly occupied by Elizabeth; when the doors being thrown open to all who chose to enter, during many hours the populace poured in, falling on their knees, and tendering their vows of loyalty and obedience to their sovereign and empress, Catherine. Meanwhile, the conspirators were not inert;—they visited every quarter of the metropolis, establishing guard, and keeping cannon ready appointed, encountering but little opposition. Prince George of Holstein, the czar's uncle, on offering some show of resistance, was instantly arrested, and conveyed to prison. One single man, named Bressan, who owed his fortune to the emperor, dared to prove his gratitude and fidelity. He dressed up one of his servants as a peasant, and despatched him with a note to the emperor, who had left Oranienbaum for Peterhof.

On arriving at the palace, Catherine had immediately sent a detachment of soldiers for her son, Paul. The young prince was seized with a panic at the sight of so many armed men; for he had often been told of the designs which the czar, his father, had formed against him; but Count Panino, his tutor, took the child in his arms, and conveyed him to his mother. She carried him with her into the balcony, raising him up in view of the people, who redoubled their acclamations at the sight. The nobles, finding how the current of public feeling ran, were not slow in following its direction:—they also came, in the course of the day, to tender their homage to the empress. Towards noon, she put forth a manifesto, which was distributed throughout the metropolis; and placed in the

hands of all the foreign ministers. It is recorded, that the conspirator, Odart, who had been entrusted with the secret printing of this document, and had kept it by him during some days, exclaimed on the morrow of the revolution:—"Heaven be thanked! I'm quit of the fear of being broken on the wheel!" During the distribution of the manifesto, Catherine dressed herself in the uniform of the guards, borrowing the suit of a young officer, named Talizin. She wore the order of St. Andrew; mounted on horseback, and went, accompanied by the Princess Daschkoff (who also was equipped in regimentals) to review the ranks. It was on this occasion that Potemkin, then a young cavalry ensign, perceiving that Catherine had no sword-knot, advanced to offer her his. The horse he rode, accustomed to military evolutions, and to form in line, was some time ere it would retreat from beside the charger on which the empress sat; so that she had leisure to remark the grace and address of him who, at a subsequent period, gained so great an ascendancy over her. The troops, well charged with beer and brandy, and won by her imperial majesty's gracious conduct, were uproarious in their demonstrations of attachment,—their enthusiasm reaching its climax upon her dining near to an open window, within view of the soldiery and a multitude of gazers assembled in the principal square.

As yet Peter III. knew nothing of what was passing; but the disguised emissary, sent by Bressan, brought the fatal news, and spread dismay amid the little band of profligates that, as usual, were immediately about the person of the dissolute czar. The chancellor, Woronzoff, proposed going to Petersburg to parley with the empress, and induce her to return to her allegiance. The emperor accepted the proposal; but, on the chancellor's arrival in the capital, Catharine received him with a quiet smile, and said:—"You see; it is not I who act; I yield but to the nation's

desire." The pliant chancellor, who had sold his sister's honour, and could care little for his own, bowed to the necessity, and ingeniously suggested his being placed under guard: thus, by a neat contrivance, securing his own safety from Catherine's partizans, and sheltering himself from the czar's inevitable suspicions.

In the evening, Catherine again mounted on horseback; and with a drawn sword in her hand, and a wreath of oak round her head, she prepared to lead her troops, who were marshalling into order for march; while Princess Daschkoff and Colonel Razoumoffsky attended at her side. A crowd of courtiers thronged around her; and all vied in manifesting their eagerness to share her dangers and swell her triumph. She halted at the head of her army, in a little village, about seven versts from Petersburg; and here she entered a cottage, where she slept for some hours on a heap of military cloaks, which the officers who formed her escort piled up to make a couch for her. From first to last, in short, of that eventful day, she enacted to perfection the part of a revolutionary heroine; and she secured the reward she had in view—firm and sole possession, thenceforth, of imperial dignity.

Peter III., despoiled of power, and deprived of respect by his pusillanimous conduct and total want of decision or dignity, sank into a mere negation. He was made to sign a deed of renunciation; and was conducted to a small country-house, belonging to Razoumoffsky, where he was kept under strict guard. He had not been in this retired spot more than six days, when Alexis Orloff, and a ruffian named Teploff, came into his apartment, and told him that the object of their visit was to announce his speedy deliverance; at the same time inviting themselves to dine with him. According to the Russian custom, glasses and brandy were brought in; and while Teploff held the czar in talk, Orloff filled the glasses with liquor, and dropped into one of them a poison furnished by a

court-physician of infamous memory, named Crousse. The czar, suspecting nothing, took the draught and swallowed it; but was immediately seized with such racking pains, that the whole truth rushed upon him, and he vehemently taxed Orloff with his foul deed, uttering loud cries for help. One of his valets ran to his assistance; but the man was quickly compelled to leave the room, while Baratinsky, who was captain of the guard on duty there, came in during the scuffle that ensued. Alexis Orloff, who had flung the czar on the ground, knelt upon his breast, and with one powerful hand grasped his throat, while with the other he pressed in the skull. Baratinsky and Teploff passed a handkerchief round his throat, and drew it tight with a slip-knot. Peter, in struggling, inflicted a severe scratch on the face of Baratinsky, of which the traitor long bore the mark; but the wretched czar's strength quickly gave way, and the murderers finished their work of strangulation.

A sudden attack of mortal illness was publicly announced as the cause of Peter III.'s death; and Catherine's behaviour, on the occasion, was marked by a prudence and self-possession which did greater honour to her powers of dissimulation than to her moral or natural feeling. She played her part to admiration—such as it was. After Alexis Orloff brought her the news, she dined in public as usual; held her court in the evening with the utmost gaiety; and next day—causing the tidings to be announced to her while she was at table—she rose and retired, her eyes filled with tears. Certes, of such a woman's weeping, might be added what Shakespeare's Antony says of the crocodile:—"And the tears of it are wet."

Catherine had a strong idea of the value of keeping up appearances; she neglected nothing that might tell well, that might gain her credit, and make her pass for one who deserved the prosperity

that attended her. She knew the advantage of seeming holy,—of "assuming a virtue if she had it not;" and she, accordingly, among other convenient simulations, could put on a cloak of piety when she thought it requisite to have a regard for religion. For instance, at the period of the Empress Elizabeth's death, she courted popular admiration by frequenting the churches where prayers for the the imperial restoration to health were being offered up, although at other times not being eminent for religious observance. And on her first accession to the throne, she paid a sedulous deference to the dignitaries of the church, which she knew would win her the affections of her people, but which her subsequent conduct to the clergy little bore out. Her want of gratitude to the Princess Daschkoff—who, however flighty and vain her motives might have been in aiding the conspiracy, was still serviceable to Catherine in her zeal throughout the affair—was consistent with the rest of her heartless conduct. Once securely established in her imperial seat, she disregarded all the princess's claims to notice and recompense; and upon Madame Daschkoff's requesting—with the liveliness of her character and years (she was not much more than eighteen)—the colonelcy of a regiment of guards, as her reward; Catherine replied, smiling ironically, that she "would figure better in an Academy of Letters than in a military post." The princess, deeply hurt at this retort—which reflected upon her literary pretensions—could not conceal her mortification; with her native impetuosity, therefore, she spoke loudly among her friends of Catherine's ingratitude. This was reported to the empress, who forthwith ordered her to retire to Moscow.

Nevertheless, Catherine's private character, however little worthy of regard, should not be allowed to act so far prejudicially, as to cause her being denied the merits which were undoubtedly hers. She was a clever-headed woman, with very little conscience,

and no heart. She was shrewd in perception, astute in judgment, and hard in principle. It was a maxim with her, to be steadfast in adherence to design. She held this as a rule:—"It is requisite to observe constancy in projects. Better do ill than change a resolution. Fools only are undecided."

The reign of such a woman as Catherine, was felt to be greatly more important for Russia and for Europe, than that of the feeble-minded debauchee who had preceded her on the throne: and not only her subjects, but the other powers of the Continent soon became aware of her consequence as a sovereign. She knew how to make herself looked up to,—if not with respect and liking, at least with deference. Frederick the Great, of Prussia, Maria Theresa, of Austria, Louis XV., of France, and the cabinet of George III., of England, each, in turn, learned to regard with attention the acts of Catherine II., of Russia. In Poland she exercised long dictatorship. Her favourite, Poniatowsky, had been appointed to the Polish throne, and reigned under the title of Stanislaus Augustus; while frequent appeals to the Russian court from the king and senate of Warsaw, placed this unhappy country almost in vassalage to her power, until 1772, when Catherine II., Frederick II., and Joseph II., agreed upon the inter-partition of Poland. In 1785, the long-continued war between Russia and Turkey, ended in the Crimea becoming a province of the Russian empire; and in 1787, Catherine made a progress to visit this addition to her dominions. Her journey was like one grand triumphal procession the whole of the way. Palaces, like that of Aladdin in the Eastern tale, sprang up to receive her when she halted; villages arose, like magic, in the most desert spots; whole populations crowded the banks of rivers, where a week before all was solitude and desolation; herds and flocks grazed in meadows that previously presented no trace of living creature: but like the pageants at a thea-

tre, as the scene shifted, so did its occupants make their exit, but to re-appear in endless numbers. To please the eye of the Russian empress, and to give her an idea of smiling abundance, this show was got up; with just such a glittering falsehood as the palace of ice, erected to gratify the caprice of one of her predecessors, the Empress Anne, daughter of Peter the Great. The reader will not decline a reminder of the poet Cowper's graceful description of the Imperial "Folly."

"Less worthy of applause, though more admir'd,
Because a novelty, the work of man,
Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ,
Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,
The wonder of the North. No forest fell
When thou wouldst build; no quarry sent its stores
T' enrich thy walls; but thou didst hew the floods,
And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
In such a palace Aristæus found
Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
Of his lost bees to her maternal ear:
In such a palace Poetry might place
The armoury of Winter; where his troops
The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet,
Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,
And snow, that often blinds the trav'ller's course,
And wraps him in an unexpected tomb.
Silently as a dream the fabric rose;
No sound of hammer or of saw was there:
Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
Than water interfus'd to make them one.
Lamps gracefully dispos'd, and of all hues,
Illumin'd every side: a wat'ry light
Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
Another moon new risen, or meteor fall'n
From heav'n to earth, of lambent flame serene.
So stood the brittle prodigy; though smooth
And slippery the materials, yet frost-bound
Firm as a rock. Nor wanted aught within,

That royal residence might well befit,
For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths
Of flow'rs, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,
Blush'd on the pannels. Mirror needed none
Where all was vitreous; but in order due,
Convivial table and commodious seat
(What seem'd, at least, commodious seat) were there;
Sofa and couch, and high-built throne august.
The same lubricity was found in all,
And all was moist to the warm touch; a scene
Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
And soon to slide into a stream again.
Alas! 'twas but a mortifying stroke
Of undesign'd severity, that glanc'd
(Made by a monarch) on her own estate,
On human grandeur and the courts of kings.
'Twas transient in its nature, as in show
'Twas durable; as worthless, as it seem'd
Intrinsically precious; to the foot
Treacherous and false; it smil'd, and it was cold.
Great princes have great playthings."

So, for Catherine; this pretty plaything of simulated villages, and pretended flourishing peasantries, and supposed prospering farms, was brought together for her entertainment. An emperor (Joseph II. of Austria) met her, and escorted her into the Crimea; a ship was launched for her amusement; and she inspected the docks which were being constructed by her orders at Cherson on the Dnieper.

Catherine gave token that she was competent to reign advantageously: she effected several useful reforms, and established many valuable institutions. She corrected the tribunals; she founded schools, hospitals, and colonies. She ameliorated the condition of the serfs; and she encouraged popular instruction. She promoted international intercourse; and sought to extend good understanding between her own and foreign courts. She began

several canals; and erected arsenals, banks, and manufactories, besides founding numerous towns. She composed a code of legislative regulations, founded on the works of Montesquieu, and other writers on jurisprudence. This composition gained her great and wide-spread renown; for Catherine was not a little proud of her production, and forwarded copies of it to those sovereigns whose applause she was anxious to obtain. Among others, Frederick of Prussia, who knew her appetite for eulogium, wrote her a long letter, in which he placed her between Solon and Lycurgus,—(Catherine's capacity for gorging praise was indeed large!) and in the despatch to the Count de Solms—of course meant to meet the imperial eye also—he added: "History informs us that Semiramis commanded armies; that Elizabeth of England ranks among ablest politicians; that Maria Theresa showed great intrepidity on her coming to the throne;—but no female monarch has yet been a legislatress: this glory was reserved for the Empress of Russia, who has well merited the title."

She encouraged the arts; and effected various excellent improvements in the academy, where artists in the different branches of painting, sculpture, architecture; together with artificers in watch-making, metal-founding, and instruments for physical and mathematical science, received instruction, and were boarded at the state expense. She took especial pains to mark her encouragement of literature; she appointed the yearly sum of five thousand rubles, to pay those who would make versions in the Russian language of such foreign books as were worthy of translation: she granted fresh privileges to the Academy of Science, in Petersburg, and invited several strangers of note to come and share in the honours it awarded. She was a patroness of literature, and made a point of displaying her encouragement of men of letters. She was a great admirer of the French writers, especially of their

tragic poets. She made great advances to their "savans," and "philosophers," and was munificent in her offers to them. She caused overtures to be made to D'Alembert, to induce him to come to Petersburg and finish the "Encyclopédie" there; at the same time that he should undertake to superintend the education of the Grand-duke Paul, a pension of two thousand pounds being named as his remuneration; but D'Alembert declined the proposal. Hearing that Diderot was straitened in his circumstances, and intended selling his library to obtain a dowry for his only daughter, Catherine bought the library, and left the former owner its enjoyment, by appointing him librarian. Some of the anecdotes recorded of the pleasant terms of familiarity which she maintained in her intercourse with Diderot, are among the most agreeable relating to her social history. He was accustomed to converse with her every day after dinner. Philosophy, legislation, politics, ordinarily formed the topics of these discussions. Diderot used to dilate upon his principles of liberty, and the rights of the people, with his accustomed enthusiasm and eloquence. The empress appeared delighted; but she was very far from adopting his views. She has been heard to say:—"Monsieur Diderot, in many things, is a hundred years of age; in others, he is not more than ten years old." She used to make the philosopher sit beside her; and sometimes, in the eagerness of his discourse, he would forget the rank of his interlocutor, and tap the empress on the knee with the back of his hand as he talked; but her good sense never reproved in him this breach of etiquette. To Voltaire she showed invariable, and marked deference; repeatedly inviting him to Petersburg; but the "dog-fox" sage knew better than to exchange the luxury of independence in his retreat at Ferney, for the uneasy distinction of a Russian court-residence. Catherine took every pains to secure Voltaire's good opinion, and obtain his good word. She

knew that he was the arch-dispenser of glory to European sovereigns at that period; and that it rested mainly with his pen to delineate them advantageously to the eyes of posterity; she neglected no means, therefore, that might win her his favourable report. Thus playfully and gaily she was wont to write to him; mingling graceful compliment with condescending familiarity: intimating, at the same time, a desire for his applause, couched in the most flattering terms:—"I shall feel pleased with myself, whenever I shall obtain your approbation, sir. I have revised my instructions for the code, some weeks since, because I then thought the peace nearer at hand than it was; and I believe I acted rightly in what I did. It is true, this code,—for which a great deal of material is preparing, and some is already arranged,—will still give me considerable work to do, before it becomes as perfect as I wish to see it; but no matter, it must be finished, although Taganrok has the sea on its south, and high grounds on its north.

"Meanwhile, your projects respecting this place cannot be carried into effect before peace shall have secured its environs from all apprehension by either sea or land; for until the capture of the Crimea, it was the frontier place against the Tartars. Perhaps, ere long, they'll bring me the Crimean Khan in person. I have just learned that he has not crossed the sea with the Turks; but that he remains up in the mountains, with a small band of followers; something like the Pretender in Scotland, after his defeat at Culloden. If the Khan come to me, we'll try what we can do to polish him a little; and to revenge myself upon him, I'll make him dance, and he shall go to the French theatre."

Catherine was fond of mingling a certain drollery with her rebukes. Her answer to the Princess Daschkoff, already related, contains an instance of this touch of humour in her sarcasm,—and which, naturally, rendered it doubly pungent to the princess. On

another occasion, when the empress had been dispensing sumptuous recompenses to her different generals, for their military services in the gaining of an important victory, some of them chose to consider themselves inadequately rewarded, and not only expressed their discontent, but sent in their resignations. Catherine accepted them; and during the evening she said to her courtiers:—"I sent off a courier to-day; and I give you, as a riddle, to guess where I sent him." No one (of course) could possibly imagine,—and would not, if they could: but the next day the enigma was solved. The empress had sent for, from a village near Moscow, some dozens of little peg-tops,—boys' playthings; and these she directed should be carried to the three generals who had just resigned, with this message from her:—"that as henceforth they would be sadly out of work, she had sent them something to amuse themselves with."

One of the strong proofs of Catherine's superior talent, was her being able to do so very many things at once, and all well. Although incessantly occupied with grand projects, she seemed as if wholly given up to pleasure. The secret lay in her admirable distribution of time. She found time,—owing to her excellent economy of hours, and orderly arrangement of them for each employment,—to work at state-affairs with her ministers; to decree new laws; to write with her own hand the orders and despatches sent to her ambassadors and generals; to maintain a continued correspondence with men of letters, and artists; to give regularly appointed audiences to her subjects; to be present at all the court amusements; and to attend to her intrigues and gallantries. Constant in her ambition, she was inconstant in her amours; and both these opposed pursuits made large demands upon her time. To keep in view ambitious schemes, and to change a favourite, require some attention and management; and Catherine found time

for both these occupations. The number of her favourites chronicled by name in the memoirs of her time, amount to no fewer than twelve; while the numberless officers and courtiers who were reported to have been regarded by her with an eye of partiality, may be summed up in one word,—Legion.

The way in which Catherine disposed of her discarded favourites, is characteristic. They received an order to travel; and on arriving at the first stage of their journey, they found munificent presents awaiting them,—diamonds, plate, money, and an estate valued at so many serfs' worth: estates in Russia being estimated by the amount of peasants—human live-stock; so many heads of (not cattle, but) men and women—upon them. Some of the anecdotes related of the empress's favourites, serve to show the sort of men she approved, as well as to exhibit traits of her own character. One of them, named Zoritz, complained of his sudden dismissal, and besought a friend in power to enquire the cause of his imperial mistress. She answered lightly :—"Yesterday I liked him;—to-day I don't like him. Perhaps if he were better educated, I should like him still; but his ignorance makes me blush." [Catherine's *blushes!*] "He can speak nothing but Russian. He must travel in France and England to learn other languages." And Zoritz, accordingly, was sent on his travels. Another young officer, Rimsky Korzakoff, who succeeded Zoritz in imperial liking, wishing, probably, to profit by the example of his predecessor's defect, was so anxious to supply the deficiency in his mental endowments, of which he was conscious, that he sought to give himself the reputation of a reading man; and accordingly ordered one of the first booksellers in Petersburg to fit him up a library; but when asked what description of books he would have, the court-military-dunce replied :—"You ought to know that better than I;

that's your affair. Put big books below, and little ones a-top; that's how they are in the empress's library."

The mode in which Catherine behaved, when she found a favourite possessing more intellect than Zoritz and Korzakoff, is noticeable in her conduct to Potemkin; and, in its way, not a whit less characteristic. The first-rate politician was not to be turned adrift, like the young fribbles above alluded to: both his adroitness and her shrewdness forbade this. When, therefore, Potemkin, like the rest, had ceased to please, he received the order to travel; but the very next evening, instead of being on his way, he quietly presented himself at the empress's whist-table, and took his seat opposite to her, just as she was beginning the game. Without noticing his flagrant disobedience, she dealt him a card, observing that he was "a lucky player;"—and no farther mention was made of his retirement. She, on the contrary, made a friend of the discarded favourite; and retained him near her, as her confidential minister, availing herself of his consummate abilities as a statesman, until the period of his death. When this occurred, Catherine gave an energetic proof of her diligence and business-habits; she shut herself up, and dedicated herself to work in the administration and government of the empire, for fifteen hours at a time, and apportioned out among her other ministers the duties which Potemkin had, till then, so ably discharged.

Catherine knew how to make her feelings subservient to her views. In the first place, her feelings were not sensitive; and in the next place they were entirely under control. She had secret anxieties lest she should be dethroned, or her life attempted: but whenever these beset her, she used to talk with gaiety of the long and prosperous course she hoped to enjoy. She once found among her papers, in her study, where she was in the habit of

spending many hours alone, reading or writing, a little note, containing a menace of assassination;—and never had she worn a countenance of greater composure and confidence than upon that occasion. Her thirst for glory enabled her to constrain her features to assume what expression she chose; and to feign such sentiments as she thought most likely to win panegyric. When her interests demanded it, she could be full of glowing profession, and zealous show; when her purposes required an appearance of goodness, she could talk virtuously; but her actions rarely seconded her protestations. She cloaked defective worth with large words; and when liking waned, concealed it by profuse gifts.

> "When love begins to sicken and decay,
> It useth an enforced ceremony."

Certainly Catherine's did: she heaped presents, as soon as she cared not a straw for the object of her munificence. She was a pattern-politician for a hollow world.

The pleasantest points to contemplate in Catherine, are her occasional ease of condescension, and graciousness of demeanour, in the midst of her imperial hardiness, and haughtiness of etiquette; and her fondness for children. The former is noted in her familiarity of behaviour with Diderot, and her manner of suffering freedoms from a few privileged adherents. An example of the latter is recorded, in her allowing herself, in one or two instances, to be called "Katinga," or "Katouschka," which are the Russian diminutives for Catherine. A certain facetious doctor of the name Janijossy, addressed her thus: she was occasionally subject to fits of depression; and when he observed her under the influence of one of these moody humours, he used to say, jocosely: "Come, come, Katinga; we must be gay if we wish to be well; and we must take exercise if we wish to be gay." And then he would take her arm in his, and walk her with him round the palace gar

dens. It recalls Dick Tarlton's style with Queen Bess, as related by Fuller; who says that when her majesty was gloomily disposed, this privileged jester could "undumpish her at pleasure."

Catherine's fondness for children is made manifest by the care with which she provided for their education; and by the delight she took in having them constantly about her. She had a number of them always in her departments; and allowed them to use the same liberties and freedom of intercourse with her, as the young princes, her grandsons. They never called the empress by any other title than grandmamma; and she received, and returned their caresses with pleased cordiality. She not only promoted public education with ceaseless interest, but she gave it her personal superintendence and inspection; and the minuteness with which she entered into the details of her grandchildren's instruction, is even beautiful, from such a woman. She directed its course herself;—she devoted a portion of her time, daily, to its progress: she wrote several essays on history and moral philosophy for the use of the young princes, and chose a very superior woman as governess to the young princesses. She attended their lessons, and looked over their studies and copy-books, appending notes to them with her own hand, addressed sometimes to the pupils, sometimes to the teachers. One day, chancing to come into their school-room in their absence, she perceived that the morning's lesson had for its subject, the government of Switzerland; and that the tutor had treated the theme with the candour and warmth of a man who knew how to appreciate the advantages possessed by a free people. She wrote at the foot of the page:—"Monsieur La Harpe, pray continue your lessons in this manner. Your sentiments extremely please me." Later on, the French revolution gave a check to the empress's liberal sentiments; but it was something for her to have seen the value of liberality at any time,—

especially when influencing the opinions of those who were to be the future rulers of the Russian empire.

Catherine was still in the full ardour of her ambitious aspirations, and the eager pursuit of her projects for extending the possessions of Russia, together with her own aggrandisement and glory, when a sudden death put an end to her schemes and her life at once. She expired on the 17th November, 1796, after having reigned thirty-five years.

Catherine II. was pretty during her youth; and when in maturity, she possessed both grace and majesty. She was of medium height, but well proportioned; and as she carried her head very upright, she seemed taller than she really was. Her forehead was ample; her nose rather aquiline; her mouth well cut, and pleasing; her chin somewhat long, but not ill-formed. Her hair was of a chestnut brown; her eyebrows, dark and full. Her blue eyes were capable of sweetness, which they often put on; but still oftener wore a haughty look. Her countenance was not wanting in expression; but this expression served but little to reveal what was passing within,—or rather, she made it a means of the better disguising what she really felt. She generally wore the Russian costume,—a green or scarlet dress (those being the favourite national colours) which formed a shortish robe, opening in front, with light sleeves descending to the wrist. Her hair, lightly powdered, lay in curls upon her shoulders; and on the top she wore a little cap covered with diamonds. Towards the latter years of her life she rouged highly, thinking to hide the traces of time, —and perhaps because it was a prevalent mode in France, the Russians having been always fond of adopting Paris fashions (which people are not?) as a mark of refinement. She took a far better method for preserving her complexion in juvenile clearness and smoothness,—she was abstemious in her meals; taking but a

light breakfast, eating moderately at dinner, and never indulging in suppers. So temperate a diet was the more remarkable, in one who lived where the richest viands and rarest wines were partaken of to excess:—but possibly, the very examples she had before her eyes, served as a warning to a woman of Catherine's shrewd good sense.

In order truly to depict her character, particulars have been narrated in the course of this account which otherwise would not have been discussed. But it was impossible to give a faithful picture of Catherine II., and not allude to her moral, or rather her immoral principles. It would have been unjust to a pure and noble woman, illustrious, and, morally, a perfect woman, like Isabella of Castile—seeing that, as a queen, she combined all that was finest in virtuous conduct with all that was greatest in regal accomplishment—not to have represented the Empress Catherine in her true colours. She was a female sovereign of even masculine energy of cleverness; but she was masculine in her views of morality. Catherine II. of Russia had male favourites as kings have mistresses; and she would doubtless have asserted her equal claims—having equal power with the kings—to act as they did: it would therefore be drawing but an imperfect pourtrayal of her character, were not this coarse particular adduced, while recording the talent for state administration, and for extension of territorial dominion, which distinguished her; and which rendered this empress, perhaps, the most eminent monarch that ever occupied the Russian throne.

MISS NIGHTINGALE.

Instead of commencing the present subject, like the rest, with a definition of the peculiar characteristic embodied by her, as one of our World-Noted Women, it might perchance be better to begin with an apology for venturing to introduce a living personage at all in a book discussing character. It has been justly said by a celebrated French writer:—"On doit des égards aux vivants; on ne doit aux morts que la vérité." [We owe consideration to the living; while to the dead, we owe but truth.] Happily, mere truth is the most honouring consideration that can be paid to the character of Miss Nightingale. The only injustice that could be done to her merit, would consist in forbearing to state simply and candidly the facts of her career, or to pass them over in silence; for no written praise can add honour to the merit of her, who, as Shakespeare says, is—

> "One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
> And in the essential vesture of creation
> Does bear all excellency."

Therefore encomium may be spared, not only out of regard to her modesty,—for hers are just the kind of virtues which of all others most shrink from laudation;—namely, Philanthropy, Charity, Benevolence,—but because their very existence and exercise bespeak

their own homage. Happy the deeds, which in their bare enumeration proclaim their own surpassing worth. The bald chronicle of Miss Nightingale's actions suffices at once to record and eulogize them.

It were difficult to write of a living illustrious woman without dread of wounding her sensitive delicacy; but the reverential spirit in which her character is held forth to admiration,—the wholesome emulation excited by relating such deeds,—the hope of thus producing yet another good, in addition to all that she has effected, will, it is trusted, plead in extenuation with the object of this narrative, for making her the subject—not of panegyric, that has been shown to be out of the question, but—of admiring discussion.

Miss Florence Nightingale is the youngest daughter and presumptive co-heiress of Mr. William Shore Nightingale, of Embley Park, Hampshire, and the Lea Hurst, Derbyshire, in England.

As it has been frequently stated in the British public prints that Miss Nightingale numbers the same years with the Queen of England, and as that royal lady playfully entered her age in the list, at the time the census was taken of the population of Great Britain, it would be no infringement of discretion to place the period of Miss Nightingale's birth somewhere about the year 1819; but one authority affirms that she was born at Florence in the year 1823, and received her Christian name in memory of that fair Italian city. It is well known also, that she is a young lady of singular endowments, both natural and acquired. She possesses a knowledge of the ancient languages, and of the higher branches of mathematics; while her attainments in general art, science, and literature, are of no common order. Her command of modern languages is extensive; and she speaks French, German, and Italian, fluently as her native English. She has visited and studied the various nations of Europe, and has ascended the Nile

to its farthest cataract. While in Egypt, she tended the sick Arabs with whom she came in contact; and it was frequently in her power, by judicious advice, to render them important services. Graceful, feminine, rich, and popular, her influence over those with whom she comes in contact is powerful as it is gentle and persuasive. Her friends and acquaintance embrace a large circle, and include persons of all classes and persuasions; but her happiest place has ever been her home; where,—in the centre of numerous distinguished relatives, and in the simplest obedience to her admiring parents, she dwelt.

Yet this was the life she left—a life not only blessed with all that renders existence privileged, but with all that makes it useful to others (the dearest of all privileges to her nature)—to fulfil a self-imposed duty.

It was because she felt the sphere of her utility to be even larger than the one afforded by her affluent home, that she gave up that home. From infancy she had a yearning affection for her kind,—a sympathy with the weak, the oppressed, the destitute, the suffering and the desolate. The schools and the poor around Lea Hurst and Embley first saw and felt her as a visitor, teacher, consoler, and expounder. Then she frequented and studied the schools, hospitals, and reformatory institutions of London, Edinburgh, and the Continent. In 1851, when the whole civilized world had a holiday during the Great Exhibition, and were engaged in parties of pleasure, Miss Nightingale was within the walls of one of the German houses, or hospitals, for the care of the lost and infirm. At the Great Lutheran hospital, established at Kaiserwërth, near Düsseldorf, on the Rhine,—an establishment out of which no person is allowed to pass to practise as a nurse, except after having gone through severe examination,—Miss Nightingale spent some months in daily and nightly attendance on

the sick and the miserable, accumulating experience in all the duties and labours of female ministration. The gentleman at the head of that establishment, the Pasteur Fliedner, asserted that since he had been director of that institution, no one had ever passed so distinguished an examination, or shown herself so thoroughly mistress of all she had to learn, as Miss Nightingale.

On her return to England, she, for a space, became again the delight of her own happy home; but it was not long before her desire to extend her aid to those who needed relief, prevailed to bring her forth. The hospital established in London for sick governesses was about to fail for want of proper management; and Miss Nightingale consented to be placed at its head. Derbyshire and Hampshire were exchanged for the narrow, dreary establishment in Harley Street, to which she devoted the whole of her time, and her fortune. While her friends missed her at assemblies, lectures, concerts, exhibitions, and all the entertainments for taste and intellect with which London in its season abounds, she whose powers could have best appreciated them, was sitting beside the bed and soothing the last complaints of some poor dying, homeless, hapless governess. Miss Nightingale found pleasure in tending these poor destitute women in their infirmities, their sorrows, their deaths, or their recoveries. She was seldom seen out of the walls of the institution; and the few friends whom she admitted, found her in the midst of nurses, letters, prescriptions, accounts, and interruptions. Her health sank under the heavy pressure; but a little Hampshire fresh air restored her; and the failing institution was saved.

Then came the disastrous accounts of the sufferings in the East; of the additional rigours that the soldiery were enduring from want of effectual hospital treatment, and from defective management in supplying stores and necessary relief. There arose at once an

enthusiastic desire to remedy the evil. The English, with their energy of resolve, where existing mischief demands instant cure, raised a fund which should furnish the requisite power to provide what was needed immediately, without waiting for forms, and boards, and official obstruction under the name of authorized organization. A subscription was set afoot; and in less than a fortnight the sum of £15,000 was sent into the Times Office for the above purpose. The proprietors of that journal sent out a special commissioner, Mr. Macdonald, to administer this fund, from which thousands of shirts, sheets, stockings, flannels, quilted coats, and hospital utensils, besides large quantities of arrow-root, sago, sugar, tea, soap, wine, and brandy, were supplied. One of the chief points in which the deficiency of proper comfort and relief for the sick and wounded sufferers was felt, was the want of good nursing. To send out a band of skilful nurses was soon found to be one of the most essential of all supplies. But unless these were really skilled, more harm than good would certainly accrue: zeal, without experience, could effect little; and a bevy of incompetent, or ill-organized nurses, would prove an incumbrance, instead of an assistance. Now it was that a field was opened for the wider exercise of Miss Nightingale's genius and philanthropy; and now it was, that her admirable abilities were secured for the great object in view. At the request of the Right Hon. Sydney Herbert, Miss Nightingale at once accepted the proposal that she should undertake to form and controul the entire nursing establishment for the British sick and wounded soldiers and sailors in the Crimea. Indeed, it is asserted, that by a strange coincidence—one of those coincidences arising out of urgent necessity felt and met at once—she had herself written to Mr. Herbert on the very same day, volunteering her services where they were so much needed. The task was one which involved sacrifices and responsibilities of

formidable magnitude:—the risk of her own life, the pang of separation from her family and friends, the certainty of encountering hardships, dangers, toils, and the constantly recurring scene of human suffering amidst all the worst horrors of war; together with an amount of obstacle and difficulty in the carrying out of her noble work, wholly incalculable. Few but would have recoiled from such a prospect; Miss Nightingale, however, met it with her own spirit of welcome for occasion to devote herself in the cause of humanity. Heroic was the firmness with which she voluntarily encountered her task; glorious was the constancy with which she persevered in, and achieved it. The same force of nature which had enabled her quietly and resolutely to accumulate powers of consolation and relief for the behoof of her fellow-creatures, enabled her to persist steadily to the end, and carry out her high purpose with a success, holy as it was triumphant.

On Tuesday the 24th of October, 1854, Miss Nightingale, accompanied by the Revd. Mr. Bracebridge, and his wife, and a staff of thirty-seven nurses, set out from England. On her way through France, she and her companions were received with the most respectful attention; hotel-keepers refusing payment for their accommodation, servants declining the customary fees, and all classes vieing to show sympathy with their mission. On passing through the French metropolis, one of the Paris journals made a characteristic remark upon Miss Nightingale's appearance, which, coming from the source whence it did, was the extreme of intended compliment and interest. The paper observed, that "her toilet was charming; and she was almost as graceful as a Parisienne." On the Friday following, Miss Nightingale and her companions embarked at Marseilles in the *Vectis* steamer; and, after a stormy passage, they reached Scutari on the 5th of November, just before the wounded in the action of Balaklava began to arrive.

Five rooms which had been set apart for wounded general officers, were happily unoccupied; and these were assigned to Miss Nightingale and her nurses; who, in appearance and demeanour, formed a strong contrast to the usual aspect of hospital attendants. Under such management, the chaotic confusion of the vast hospital was quickly reduced to order:—the wounded, before left for many hours unattended, now scarcely uttered a groan without some gentle nurse being at hand to adjust their pillow, and alleviate their discomfort:—tears stood in the eyes of many a veteran while he confessed his conviction, that indeed the British soldier was cared for by his country; since ladies would leave the comforts and luxuries of home to come and tend him in his misery. Far from realizing the fears which had been entertained by officials, that this new addition to the staff of a military hospital would not work well, Miss Nightingale and her nurses were "never found in the way, except to do good."—Whenever, as after the battle of Inkermann crowds of wounded arrived, there was feminine ministry at hand to tend them; and when medical stores failed, or demand arose for articles not forthcoming, the Times Commissioner supplied Miss Nightingale at once with what was needed, if it could be procured by money in the bazaars or stores of Constantinople. This promptitude of Mr. Macdonald in seconding Miss Nightingale's exertions, deserves all praise; for it mainly enabled her to carry out the immediate requisites of her plan. His own excellent letters, written at the time, give a most vivid picture of the difficulties she had to contend with, in the shape of ill-contrived arrangements alone, besides other obstructions to her procedure. A rule of the service, which required, that articles (needed for present use) should be obtained from home through the Commissariat; and a regulation which appointed that a "board" must sit upon stores already landed, before they could be given out, will serve as instances to

show what were some few of the obstacles against which Miss Nightingale had to exert her energies of discretion and presence of mind. To comprehend the evils occasioned by such impediments, an extract from one of the nurses' letters will offer an example:—"I know not what sight is most heart-rending; to witness fine-looking, strong young men worn down by exhaustion, and sinking under it, or others coming in fearfully wounded. The whole of yesterday was spent in sewing men's mattrasses together; then in washing and assisting the surgeons to dress their wounds; and seeing the poor fellows made as comfortable as their circumstances would admit of after five days' confinement on board ship, during which their wounds were not dressed. Out of the four wards committed to my charge, eleven men died in the night, simply from exhaustion; which, humanly speaking, might have been stopped, could I have laid my hands upon such nourishment as I know they ought to have had."

In the article of hospital clothing, the same deplorable effects resulted from the delay and confusion which existed before Miss Nightingale's remedial measures came into operation. The original supply of these articles, inadequate as it was, had been long reduced so low, that but for the purchases made with the money of the Fund, and distributed through Miss Nightingale, a large proportion of the invalids must have been without a change of underclothing, condemned to wear the tattered filthy rags in which they were brought down from the Crimea. A washing contract existed, indeed, but it was entirely inoperative; and the consequence was, that not only the beds, but the shirts of the men were in a state foul and unwholesome beyond description. To remedy this, a house well supplied with water, was engaged at the charge of the Fund, close to the Barrack Hospital, where the clothing supplied by Miss Nightingale might be cleansed and dried. Her

supervision had an eye for all needs; her experience had a knowledge for all that should be done; and her energy enabled her to have carried into effect that which she saw and knew ought to be effected.

In ten days after their arrival, Miss Nightingale and her assistants fitted up a sort of impromptu kitchen; and from this hastily constructed resource eight hundred men were daily supplied with their respective needful quantities of well-cooked food, besides beef-tea in abundance. They who are acquainted with the plan of cookery pursued in barracks, where all a company's meat and vegetables are boiled in one copper, the portions belonging to messes being kept in separate nets, will know how that food is likely to suit the sickly appetite of a fevered patient, and how invaluable a system which provided the needful light diet prepared with due quickness as well as nicety, would be in hospital treatment. This was effected by Miss Nightingale's kitchen, even in its early operation; and it subsequently attained a degree of excellence productive of extensive benefit scarcely to be estimated by those unacquainted with the importance of such details. Her extraordinary intelligence and capacity for organization, showed itself in subordinate, as well as principal points of arrangement. In what might be called "house-keeping duties," she showed womanly accomplishment, no less than nice judgment. When the nurses were not needed at the bedsides of the sick and wounded, they were employed by her in making up needful articles of bedding, and surgical requisites,—such as stump pillows for amputation cases. Not only was the laundry in excellent working-order, but by the strong representation of Miss Nightingale the dysentery wards were cleansed out, and general purification was made a diligently regarded particular.

During the first two months of her arrival, when there was no

one else to act, Miss Nightingale was the real purveyor of those vast establishments—the hospitals at Scutari; providing what could not be obtained through the regular channels of the service, and, especially from her kitchen, supplying comforts without which many a poor fellow would have died. Her name and benevolent services were the theme of frequent and grateful praise among the men in the trenches; and the remark was made, that she made the barrack hospital so comfortable, that the convalescents began to show a decided reluctance to leave it. Stores of shirts, flannels, socks, and a thousand other articles, which she and her nurses distributed; brandy, wine, and a variety of things, required at a moment's notice, and which could be procured from Miss Nightingale's quarters without delay or troublesome formality, rendered her the virtual purveyor for the whole of that period, during which she was avowedly the person in whose keeping rested not only the comfort, but the existence of several thousand sick and wounded soldiers. One of Mr. Macdonald's impressive sentences serves to paint the condition of the spot in which Miss Nightingale at that time drew breath. He says: "Wounds almost refuse to heal in this atmosphere; the heavy smell of pestilence can be perceived outside the very walls." In one of the last letters he wrote, before he was compelled by failing health to return to England, the Times Commissioner bore the following earnest testimony to Miss Nightingale's excellence. It affords a beautiful picture of her in the midst of her self-imposed task of mercy and charity. These are his words:—"Wherever there is disease in its most dangerous form and the hand of the spoiler distressingly nigh, there is that incomparable woman sure to be seen; her benignant presence is an influence for good comfort, even amid the struggles of expiring nature. She is a 'ministering angel,' without any exaggeration, in these hospitals: and as her slender form glides quietly along each corridor,

every poor fellow's face softens with gratitude at the sight of her. When all the medical officers have retired for the night, and silence and darkness have settled down upon those miles of prostrate sick, she may be observed alone, with a little lamp in her hand, making her solitary rounds. The popular instinct was not mistaken which, when she set out from England on her mission of mercy, hailed her as a heroine; I trust that she may not earn her title to a higher though sadder appellation. No one who has observed her fragile figure and delicate health, can avoid misgivings lest these should fail. With the heart of a true woman, and the manners of a lady, accomplished and refined beyond most of her sex, she combines a surprising calmness of judgment and promptitude and decision of character. * * * I confidently assert, that, but for Miss Nightingale, the people of England would scarcely, with all their solicitude, have been spared the additional pang of knowing, which they must have done, sooner or later, that their soldiers, even in hospital, had found scanty refuge and relief from the unparalleled miseries with which this war has hitherto been attended."

The difficulties of Miss Nightingale's task were not only those arising out of its own appertaining perils and sacrifices, and those which resulted from official mismanagement; but she encountered much opposition springing from professional prejudices and jealousies. On their first arriving, so far from being welcomed, the advent of the nurses was looked upon as an evil, resented as an interference, and treated with tacit, if not open discountenance. At the best, they were tolerated, not encouraged. Cabals were got up, ill-feeling fostered, party differences disseminated and fomented. Passive resistance in every shape was resorted to, to prevent the installing of the nurses in the military hospitals. Against all this, nothing but the exquisite tact, firmness, and good

sense of Miss Nightingale could have prevailed. Having proved herself a vigorous reformer of hospital misrule, she had to encounter the tacit opposition of nearly all the principal medical officers: her nurses were sparingly resorted to, even in the Barrack Hospital, while in the General Hospital,—the head-quarters of one of the chief medical authorities—she held a very insecure footing. But the return of this person to England, the continued deficiencies of the purveying, and the increasing emergencies of the hospital service, enabled Miss Nightingale to extend the sphere of her usefulness; and thus, together with her own admirably patient perseverance, she succeeded in having her nurses employed in their proper posts, and her own system established in perfect working order.

It seems incredible that even professional prejudice should inspire men with such narrow-minded fears, and actuate them to such unworthy conduct; but, more incredible still, that the grand Christianity of Miss Nightingale's undertaking could not protect her from pharisaical attacks. It is truly marvellous, that a self-devotion so pure, and so noble, that it spoke its own sacred spirit of piety and holiness, should require not only explanation, but actual vindication. In one instance, a friend had to write a defence of Miss Nightingale from one of these invidious attacks—a defence of her, who deserved universal veneration for her sublime self-dedication to deeds divine in their charity and goodness! While Miss Nightingale was still in the outset of her onerous task in the East, this was the letter which the Hon. Mrs. Sydney Herbert wrote on behalf of her absent friend—the friend of thousands of sick, wounded, and dying brethren at that very time:—

"49 Belgrave Square, *Dec.* 9, 1854.

"Madam: By this post I send you a Christian Times of Friday week last, by which you will see how cruel and unjust are the re-

ports you mention about Miss Nightingale and her noble work. Since then we have sent forty-seven nurses, of which I enclose you a list. It is melancholy to think that in Christian England no one can undertake any thing without the most uncharitable and sectarian attacks; and, had you not told me so, I should scarcely have believed that a clergyman of the Established Church would have been the mouthpiece of slander. Miss Nightingale is a member of the Established Church of England, and what is called rather Low Church. But ever since she went to Scutari, her religious opinion and character have been assailed on all points:—one person writes to upbraid us for having sent her, 'understanding she is a Unitarian;' another, 'that she is a Roman Catholic,' and so on. It is a cruel return to make towards one to whom England owes so much. As to the charge of no Protestant nurses being sent, the subjoined list will convince you of its fallacy. We made no distinctions of creed; any one who was a good and skilful nurse, and understood the practice in surgical wards, was accepted, provided, of course, that we had their friends' consent, and that in other respects, as far as we could judge, they were of unexceptionable character. A large portion of the wounded being Roman Catholics, we accepted the services of some of the Sisters of Charity from St. Stephen's hospital, Dublin. I have now told you all, and feel sure that you will do your utmost to set these facts plainly before those whose minds have been disquieted by these false and unjust accusations. I should have thought that the names of Mr. and Mrs. Bracebridge, who accompanied and are remaining with Miss Nightingale, would have been sufficient guarantees of the evangelical nature of the work. But it seems nothing can stop the stream of sectarian bitterness.

"I remain, madam, yours faithfully,

"Elizabeth Herbert."

On a subsequent occasion, in a speech delivered by Mr. Sydney Herbert at Oxford, on the same subject, he said: "I recollect an excellent answer being given to a query of this kind by an Irish clergyman, who when he was asked to what sect Miss Nightingale belonged, replied: 'She belongs to a sect which unfortunately is a very rare one—the sect of the Good Samaritans.'"

The Hon. and Revd. Sydney Godolphin Osborne, in his painfully interesting work upon "Scutari and its Hospitals," observes, relative to these disgraceful animadversions upon Miss Nightingale;—"I have heard and read with indignation, the remarks hazarded upon her religious character. I found her myself to be in her every word and action a Christian; I thought this quite enough. It would have been in my opinion the most cruel impertinence, to scrutinize her words and acts, to discover to which of the many bodies of true Christians she belonged. I have conversed with her several times on the deaths of those, who I had visited ministerially in the hospitals, with whom she had been when they died. I never heard one word from her lips, that would not have been just what I should have expected from the lips of those who I have known to be the most experienced and devout of our common faith. Her work ought to answer for her faith; at least none should dare to call that faith in question, in opposition to such work, on grounds so weak and trivial as those I have seen urged. That she has been equally kind and attentive to men of every creed; that she would smooth the pillow and give water to a dying fellow-creature who might own no creed, I have no doubt; all honour to her that she does feel, that hers is the Samaritan's—not the Pharisee's work. If there is blame in looking for a Roman Catholic Priest to attend a dying Romanist, let me share it with her—I did it again and again."

This gentleman's more particular description of the lady her-

self, is especially interesting. He says:—"Miss Nightingale in appearance, is just what you would expect in any other well-bred woman, who may have seen, perhaps, rather more than thirty years of life: her manner and countenance are prepossessing, and this without the possession of positive beauty: it is a face not easily forgotten, pleasing in its smile, with an eye betokening great self-possession, and giving, when she wishes, a quiet look of firm determination to every feature. Her general demeanour is quiet, and rather reserved: still, I am much mistaken if she is not gifted with a very lively sense of the ridiculous. In conversation, she speaks on matters of business with a grave earnestness, one would not expect from her appearance. She has evidently a mind disciplined to restrain under the principles of the action of the moment, every feeling which would interfere with it. She has trained herself to command, and learned the value of conciliation towards others, and constraint over herself. I can conceive her to be a strict disciplinarian: she throws herself into a work—as its Head—as such she knows well how much success must depend upon literal obedience to her every order. She seems to understand business thoroughly. Her nerve is wonderful; I have been with her at very severe operations; she was more than equal to the trial. She has an utter disregard of contagion. I have known her spend hours over men dying of cholera or fever. The more awful to every sense any particular case, especially if it was that of a dying man, her slight form would be seen bending over him, administering to his ease in every way in her power, and seldom quitting his side till death released him."

Inexpressibly delightful is that intimation that Miss Nightingale gives token of being "gifted with a lively sense of the ridiculous." Possessing the exquisite perception of the pathetic in existence which her whole career proclaims her to have,—it would

have been a defect in her nature,—nay, a lack of the complete feeling for pathos itself—had she not betrayed a capacity for receiving humorous impressions. Humour and pathos are so nearly allied, in their source within the human heart,—so mingled in those recesses whence spring human tears at the touch of sympathy, that scarcely any being deeply affected by mournful emotion, can remain insensible to the keen appeal that resides in a ludicrous idea. Shakespeare,—who comprehended to perfection every impulse of humanity—affords multitudinous illustrations of this close consociation of a sense of pathos and a sense of humour in the finest natures. That particular feature chronicled by Mr. Osborne in his personal description of Miss Nightingale, is just the exquisite point —to our imagination—that crowns her admirable qualities. It accords with an intensely beautiful account of her, that was related by Mr. Sydney Herbert at a public meeting, convened in Miss Nightingale's honour. He said, an anecdote had lately been sent to him by a correspondent showing her great power over all with whom she had come in contact. He read the passage from the letter, which was this:—"I have just heard such a pretty account from a soldier, describing the comfort it was, even to see Florence pass—'She would speak to one and to another, and nod and smile to a many more;—but she couldn't do it to all, you know; we lay there by hundreds; but we could kiss her shadow as it fell, and lay our heads on the pillow again, content.'—What poetry there is in these men! I think I told you of another, who said, 'Before she came, there was such cussin and swearin; and after that, it was as holy as a church.'" That consoling word or two, that gentle "nod and smile" in passing, were precisely the tokens of sympathy that would come with such home-felt charm to those manly hearts from a face possessing the emotional expression which we can conceive it naturally to have. Just the woman, with just

the countenance to exercise an almost magical moral influence over men's minds. We are told,—eye-witnesses have averred, that it was singular to remark how, when men, frenzied, perhaps by their wounds and disease, had worked themselves into a passionate refusal to submit to necessary operations, a few calm sentences of hers seemed at once to allay the storm; and the men would submit willingly to the painful ordeal they had to undergo."—Noble being! Exactly that blended firmness and gentleness which makes a woman's nature so all-potent in its beneficial ascendancy over manhood. Rough, brave fellows, that would have resisted like iron, any amount of men's persuasion, would melt at once into submission at a "few calm sentences" from those lips of hers. We can fancy the mouth,—capable of smiles, or quivering with deepest feeling,—compressed into resolute steadfastness, as it persuaded the men into reasonable acquiescence with what was for their good, while betraying the latent sympathy with their every pang.

Florence Nightingale is a woman for every living woman to be proud of calling sister; and she herself is one who would not disdain to allow the claim of sisterhood from the very lowliest of her sex.

Long before Miss Nightingale returned from the East—and she would not hear of going back to England, until the war was over; although her health and strength were so far impaired, that when a yacht was placed at her disposal by Lord Ward to admit of her taking temporary change of air in sea-excursions to recruit her for farther work, she had to be carried down to the vessel, carefully and reverently, in the arms of the men, amidst their blessings and prayers for her speedy recovery—the Nation's gratitude could not be restrained from its eager desire to bestow some public token of acknowledgment towards a woman, who they felt, had earned so imperative a title to their affectionate thanks. A testimonial of some sort was agreed upon as the only means of exhibiting their unani-

mous feeling, and of permitting every one to contribute their share in the offering. But of what was it to consist? Sums of money to a lady in affluent circumstances, would be futile; ornaments to one whose chosen sphere was by the bedside of the sick, the poor, and the dying, would be idle. Any gift to herself, who had given her most precious possessions, her time, her attentions, her sympathy to others, was not to be thought of. In the first place, it was like an attempt to reward that which was beyond reward,—to pay for that which was a free donation, and, moreover, Miss Nightingale herself distinctly declined receiving any thing *for herself*. The only thing that remained then, was to raise a fund for benevolent purposes; and to place it at her disposal, that she might appropriate it according as her own philanthropic heart and admirable practical judgment should think best. Public meetings were called, presided over by a prince of the blood-royal, and one who had been a personal witness of Miss Nightingale's grand work in the East; and attended by peers, members of parliament, and some of the highest men in professional repute. They debated the question of the proposed "Nightingale Fund" in the noblest spirit of consideration;—consideration for the delicate feelings of her who was the object of this testimonial of a nation's gratitude; and consideration for those who were desirous of making this public proffer of their homage. It was decided that "a fund to enable her to establish an institution for the training, sustenance, and protection of nurses and hospital attendants" would be the best form for this national testimonial to take; and a copy of the proceedings was sent out to Miss Nightingale. Her own reply will best express the feelings with which she received it:—

"Scutari Barrack Hospital, *January* 6, 1856.

"Dear Mrs. Herbert,—In answer to your letter (which followed me to the Crimea and back to Scutari) proposing to me the

undertaking of a Training School for Nurses, I will first beg to say that it is impossible for me to express what I have felt in regard to the sympathy and the confidence shown to me by the originators and supporters of this scheme. Exposed as I am to be misinterpreted and misunderstood, in a field of action in which the work is new, complicated, and distant from many who sit in judgment upon it,—it is, indeed, an abiding support to have such sympathy and such appreciation brought home to me in the midst of labour and difficulties all but overpowering. I must add, however, that my present work is such as I would never desert for any other, so long as I see room to believe that what I may do here is unfinished. May I, then, beg you to express to the Committee that I accept their proposal, provided I may do so on their understanding of this great uncertainty, as to when it will be possible to me to carry it out.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours very truly,

"FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE."

Like all her letters, this one is most characteristic. The steady perseverance in the work she had in hand, and the determination not to abandon it, until it were completed, is precisely the *practical* and *constant* spirit which enabled her to achieve so much; while the reference to the contingent uncertainty, is consistent with one who was hourly witness to the precariousness of human projects, human hopes, human existence.

This "Nightingale Fund," in its ultimate destination, is in fact, but giving the admirable lady more work to do; but as her friend, Mr. Sydney Herbert, observed:—"Miss Nightingale looks to her reward from this country in having a fresh field for her labours, and means of extending the good that she has already begun. A compliment cannot be paid dearer to her heart than in giving her more work to do." The object of the "Training School for Nurses," is

to educate Nurses in the Central Institution, to practise them in the schools for such duties which the various fine hospitals already in existence present, and to send them out fitted to re-instruct other nurses, in branches of the parent institution; thus establishing a kind of normal college for nurses, that shall ramify throughout the whole country in its beneficial effects. Thus, at least, the present idea of the institution seems to be; but its future details are judiciously left entirely at the discretion of her who has proved herself consummately competent to judge and act on this subject; and to whom, moreover, the Fund is offered as a peoples' gift of gratitude.

But while the nation was preparing its tribute, crowned heads presented their individual tokens of admiration to the woman who, as Mr. Osborne forcibly remarked, was "the one individual, who in this whole unhappy war, has shown more than any other, what real energy, guided by good sense, can do to meet the calls of sudden emergency."

Oriental taste and good feeling in the person of the Sultan, presented Miss Nightingale with a magnificent bracelet, set in brilliants, "as a mark of his estimation of the devotion evinced by this lady in the British hospitals." English heart in the person of England's queen, the gracious sovereign, who with her own royal hand wrote those cordial words:—"I wish Miss Nightingale and the ladies would tell these poor noble, wounded, and sick men that no one takes a warmer interest, or feels more for their sufferings, or admires their courage and heroism more than their queen; day and night she thinks of her beloved troops,"—sent Miss Nightingale a jewel, the design of which was even more precious, in its beautiful emblematic significance, than even the costly gems that composed its adornment. It is described as being formed of a St. George's cross, in ruby-red enamel, on a white field, representing

England. This is encircled by a black band, typifying the office of charity, on which is inscribed a golden legend, "Blessed are the merciful." The letters 'V. R.' surmounted by a crown in diamonds, are impressed upon the centre of the St. George's Cross, from which emanate rays of gold. Wide-spreading branches of palm in bright green enamel, tipped with gold, form a framework for the shield, their stems being banded with a riband of blue enamel, inscribed with the word, 'Crimea.' At the top three brilliant stars of diamonds illustrate the idea of the light of Heaven shed upon labours of Mercy, Peace, and Charity. On the back of the jewel is an inscription written by her Majesty, recording it to be a gift in memory of services rendered to her brave army by Miss Nightingale."

Meantime, the lady was diligently pursuing to a close her glorious task in the East; and while these marks of home sympathy reached herself, she was still impersonating the sympathy of home to many a poor fellow dying far away. She not only shed this balm over the hearts of those hapless ones whom she had taken beneath the wings of her dove-like ministry; but she sped homeward, on the wings of her kindly feeling, missives of consolation and aid scarcely less needed. A poor woman, named Laurence, living in South Shields, whose husband was in the 89th regiment in the Crimea, not having heard of him for many months, was emboldened to write to Miss Nightingale, soliciting her to make enquiries regarding his fate. This was the reply:—

"Scutari Barrack Hospital, *5th March*, 1856.

"Dear Mrs. Laurence,—I was exceedingly grieved to receive your letter; because I have only sad news to give you in return. Alas! in the terrible time we had last year, when we lost from seventy to eighty men per day in these hospitals alone, many widows had to suffer like you; and your husband, I regret to say,

was among the number. He died in this hospital, February 20th, 1855, just at the time when our mortality reached its height of fever and dysentery; and on that day we buried eighty men. In order that I might be sure that there was no mistake in the name, I wrote up to the colonel of his regiment, who confirms the news in the note I enclose; and though he is mistaken in the precise date of your husband's death, there is no mistake, alas! in the fact. I wished to get this reply before I wrote to you. Your husband's balance due to him was £1. 2. 4½, which was remitted home to the Secretary of War, September 25th, 1855, from whom you can have it on application. As you were not aware of being a widow, you are, of course, not in receipt of any allowance as a widow. You should, therefore, make application to Colonel Lefroy, R. A., Hon. secretary of the Patriotic Fund, 16 A, Great George Street, Westminster, London. I enclose the necessary papers for you to fill up. Your colonel's letter will be sufficient proof of your husband's death. I enclose it for the purpose. You will state all particulars about your children. Your minister will help you to fill it up. I am very sorry for you and your trouble. Should you have any difficulty about the Patriotic Fund, you may make use of this letter, which will be sufficient evidence for you to produce of your being a widow. With sincere sympathy for your great loss,

"I remain, yours truly,

"FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE."

Thus minutely did this gentle-hearted woman enter into the griefs and wants of those, only indirectly connected with her self-appointed work: in the midst of all her arduous duties, present and immediate, she could still find time for consolation and assistance to those at a distance, even in veriest details. Among all her anxieties, responsibilities, and more vital affairs, also, she found

opportunity to attend to intelligential needs; for on one occasion, we find from a letter written in the camp before Sebastopol, during the spring of 1856, that "through the exertions of Miss Nightingale, a considerable quantity of school materials, such as maps and slates, was supplied to the schools." From her own stores she supplied books and games to cheer the dull hours of convalescence: and was foremost in every plan for affording the men harmless recreation. On her own responsibility, she advanced from the "Times Fund" the necessary sum for completing the erection of the Inkermann Café; she aided the active senior chaplain in establishing a library and school-room, and warmly supported him in getting up evening lectures for the men. She took an interest in their private affairs, and forwarded their little savings to their families in England at a time when there was no provision for sending home small sums; she wrote letters for the sick, took charge of bequests for the dying, and punctually forwarded these legacies of affection to relatives; she studied the comfort of those who recovered, and had a tent made to protect such of them as were permitted to take the air from the searching rays of an eastern sun,—moreover, enduring the mortification of a refusal from the hospital authorities to have this tent put up. Her activity of intelligence was almost miraculous; one of its personal observers, Dr. Pincoffs, declares:—"I believe that there never was a severe case of any kind that escaped her notice; and sometimes, it was wonderful to see her at the bedside of a patient who had been admitted perhaps but an hour before, and of whose arrival one would hardly have supposed it possible she could already be cognizant."

And now the time approached when her noble duty in the East came to a close, by the declaration of peace. The date of her intended return to England was kept a profound secret, out of dread of that publicity which she has ever carefully shunned.

Not only were the day and spot of her probable landing preserved unknown, lest the popular welcome that would have greeted her arrival should take place; but desirous of maintaining the strictest incognito, she refused the offer of a passage in a British man of war, and embarked on board a French vessel, passing through France by night, and travelling through her own country unrecognized, until she arrived at her own home in Derbyshire, on Friday, August 15th, 1856.

The respect observed towards her evident desire for privacy, is well expressed in some graceful stanzas that appeared in "Punch" for August 28th, 1856:—

THE NIGHTINGALE'S RETURN.

BY MR. TOM TAYLOR.

Most blessed things come silently, and silently depart;
Noiseless steals spring-time on the year, and comfort on the heart;
And still, and light, and gentle, like a dew, the rain must be,
To quicken seed in furrow, and blossom upon tree.

Nile has its foaming rapids, freshes from mountain snows:
But where his streams breed fruitfulness, serene and calm it flows;
And when he over-brims, to cheer his banks on either side,
You scarce can mark, so gradual, the swelling of his tide.

The wings of Angels make no stir, as they ply their work of love;
But by the balm they shed around, we know them that they move.
God spake not in the thunder, nor in the crushing blast;
His utterance was in the "still small voice" that came at last.

So she, our sweet Saint Florence, modest, and still, and calm,
With no parade of martyr's cross, no pomp of martyr's palm,
To the place of plague and famine, foulness, and wounds, and pain,
Went out upon her gracious toil, and so returns again.

No shouting crowds about her path, no multitude's hot breath,
To feed with wind of vanity the doubtful fires of faith:
Her path by hands official all unsmooth'd, her aims decried
By the Levites, who, when need was, pass'd on the other side.

When titles, pensions, orders, with random hand are shower'd,
'Tis well that, save with blessings, she still should walk undower'd.
What title like her own sweet name, with the music all its own?
What order like the halo by her good deeds round her thrown?

Like her own bird—all voiceless while the daylight songsters trill,
Sweet singer in the darkness, when all songs else are still,—
She on that night of suff'ring, that chill'd other hearts to stone,
Came with soft step and gentle speech, yet wise and firm of tone.

Think of the prayers for her, that to the praying heart came back
In rain of blessings, seeming still to spring upon her track:
The comfort of her graciousness to those whose road to death
Was dark and doubtful, till she showed the light of love and faith.

Then leave her to the quiet she has chosen: she demands
No greeting from our brazen throats, and vulgar clapping hands.
Leave her to the still comfort the saints know, that have striven.
What are our earthly honours? Her honours are in heaven.

There was one gracious welcome that Miss Nightingale could not but accept; and that was from the Royal Lady who was the sovereign head of the army which had so long been the especial object of Miss Nightingale's devoted care. A visit of some days at Balmoral, where the Queen was then staying in highland seclusion and enjoyment, was spent by Miss Nightingale in the sunshine of kindly favour; being treated, during her sojourn there, with the most marked distinction by her Majesty and every member of the royal family.

Since her return home, Miss Nightingale's name has met the public ear, but in quiet deeds of practical goodness, consistent with her whole career. Her own letters best serve to show the single-minded views that actuate her. When a desire was testified by some of the working men of Sheffield to erect a monument in that town to the memory of their countrymen who fell in the Crimea, application was made to Miss Nightingale, through her relative, Miss Shore, of Meersbrook Hall, requesting that she would consent

to lay the foundation-stone. Miss Nightingale's reply was this:—

"Lea Hurst, Matlock, *Oct.* 23, 1856.

"My dear Lydia:—The purpose mentioned to me in your letter has my deepest sympathy. It would have been most congenial with my feelings, on my return from the death-beds of so many brave men to take a part in it. I shall be with the men of Sheffield in spirit whenever they execute their proposed plan. It is with real pain that I feel compelled to decline the privilege which they offer to me, of laying the first stone. But I believe I shall best honour the cause of those brave dead by abstaining from appearing to court that publicity which I consider to have been my greatest impediment in the work I have been engaged in for their sakes; impeding it by arousing in some minds care for worldly distinctions. I will ask you to give this letter to Mr. Overend; and I should be glad that Mr. Overend should make known to those who had expressed a desire that I should lay the first stone, my reasons and my sorrow for not doing so; and I should say also that I feel an especial regret in declining this at Sheffield, from old and dear family recollections connected with the place. I must apologize for so late an answer, as I have only just returned home.

"Pray believe me, my dear Lydia,

"Very truly yours,

"Florence Nightingale."

Enclosed was a check for £20 towards the object proposed.

These letters of Miss Nightingale are singularly auto-characteristic; they exhibit that beautiful union of vigour and gentleness, firm decision and quiet modesty, fine judgment and enthusiastic feeling, which compose her womanly character.

A striking instance of the right-minded firmness and spirit she

could display, when occasion demanded self-assertion, is contained in a letter which accompanied the one that she wrote from Scutari, accepting the original proposal of the "Nightingale Fund." The remarks in this subjoined letter appeared to the committee (to use their own expression) "so replete with sound common sense, that they used the permission they had received to quote them." These are her words:—

"The confidence which the subscribers to this fund have shown me has been so generous and extraordinary that it is perhaps hardly necessary for me to allude to a very natural letter, which I am told has been printed, to the effect that I must forward a prospectus of what I am going to do, before I can expect to have money subscribed to do it. I think this perfectly reasonable if I originally had *asked* for the money, which, of course, I did not. But to furnish a cut and dried prospectus of my plans, situated as I am here, when I cannot look forward a month, much less a year, is what I would not if I could, and I could not if I would. I would not if I could, because every thing which succeeds is not the production of a scheme of rules and regulations made beforehand, but of a mind observing and adapting itself to wants and events. I could not if I would, because it is simply impossible to find time in the midst of one overpowering work to digest and concoct another; and if it could be done it would be simply bad, and to be hereafter altered or destroyed."

In these few pithy sentences lies the clue to understand much that is almost incomprehensible in the wondrous magnitude, difficulty and complication of the work that Miss Nightingale achieved. She possesses that mind capable of "observing and adapting itself to wants and events;" the power of seizing at once the scope and necessities of emergencies as they arise; the courage and ability to meet them; and the faculty of fastening the attention upon that

particular work which demands immediate doing. The being able to concentrate the whole thought upon the present act in hand, to cope with it promptly, and to execute it solely—one thing at a time—is the way to perform these wonders of accumulated achievement. Probably no one—not even eye-witnesses of the perplexities and painful duties that surrounded her—will ever be able fully to conceive the amount of spirit-toil as well as body-toil which that truly-called "incomparable woman" went through, while carrying out her great design in the East; and, therefore, it is next to impossible duly to estimate the true bulk of what she accomplished; but even so far as we can discern of that which she effected, it is a marvel of womanly achievement.

It was just one of those extraordinary tasks,—entirely out of the ordinary course of events—that none but a woman could execute; yet, that not one woman in ten million could have performed. It required a woman's tenderness, a woman's delicacy, a woman's instinct of discernment, in its nursing ministry; while it required the intellect, the moral command, and the nerve,—rarely to be found united in woman,—necessary to meet the multifarious difficulties it involved.

The grand point in Miss Nightingale's character is this rare combination of invincible spirit, and softest charity. Her high spirit is of the noblest sort; it gives her perfect controul over herself and others,—temper, patience, endurance in herself; courage, firmness, influence with others. Her charity is of the largest kind; it includes forbearance, gentleness, loving sympathy with all her human brethren. It inspired her with the divine desire to soothe care, to minister to sickness, to cheer and console death itself: it taught her how to alleviate distress in the living, and even how best to comfort survivors.

The liberal-minded, as well as liberal-hearted way in which this lady confers her benevolences, may be illustrated by the following

incident and letter. There is a charitable institution in France, called the "Œuvre de Nôtre Dame D'Orient," under the direction of the Abbé Legendre, almoner of the hospital of Bourbonne-les-bains, a town where a great number of military men are accustomed to resort every year for the benefit of the waters. On the formation of a relief fund, destined to ameliorate the condition of infirm soldiers after they are discharged from the hospital, Miss Nightingale forwarded her donation of a hundred francs through Lady Fox Strangways, widow of the general who was killed at Inkermann; the donation being accompanied by this letter addressed to the Abbé Legendre:—

"Sir,—I feel the warmest sympathy with you in the touching object of your work, and I am happy to join in it to the limited extent which my own engagements allow. I received, too, from the excellent religious ladies who were attached to the French army in the East, so many tokens of their friendship,—they gave me their assistance with such entire self-denial, and lightened my hard task in the hospitals with so much devotedness, that I shall always seek any opportunity of showing my gratitude to France, and to her brave children, whom I have been taught by those ladies to love and respect.

"I am, sir, yours truly,

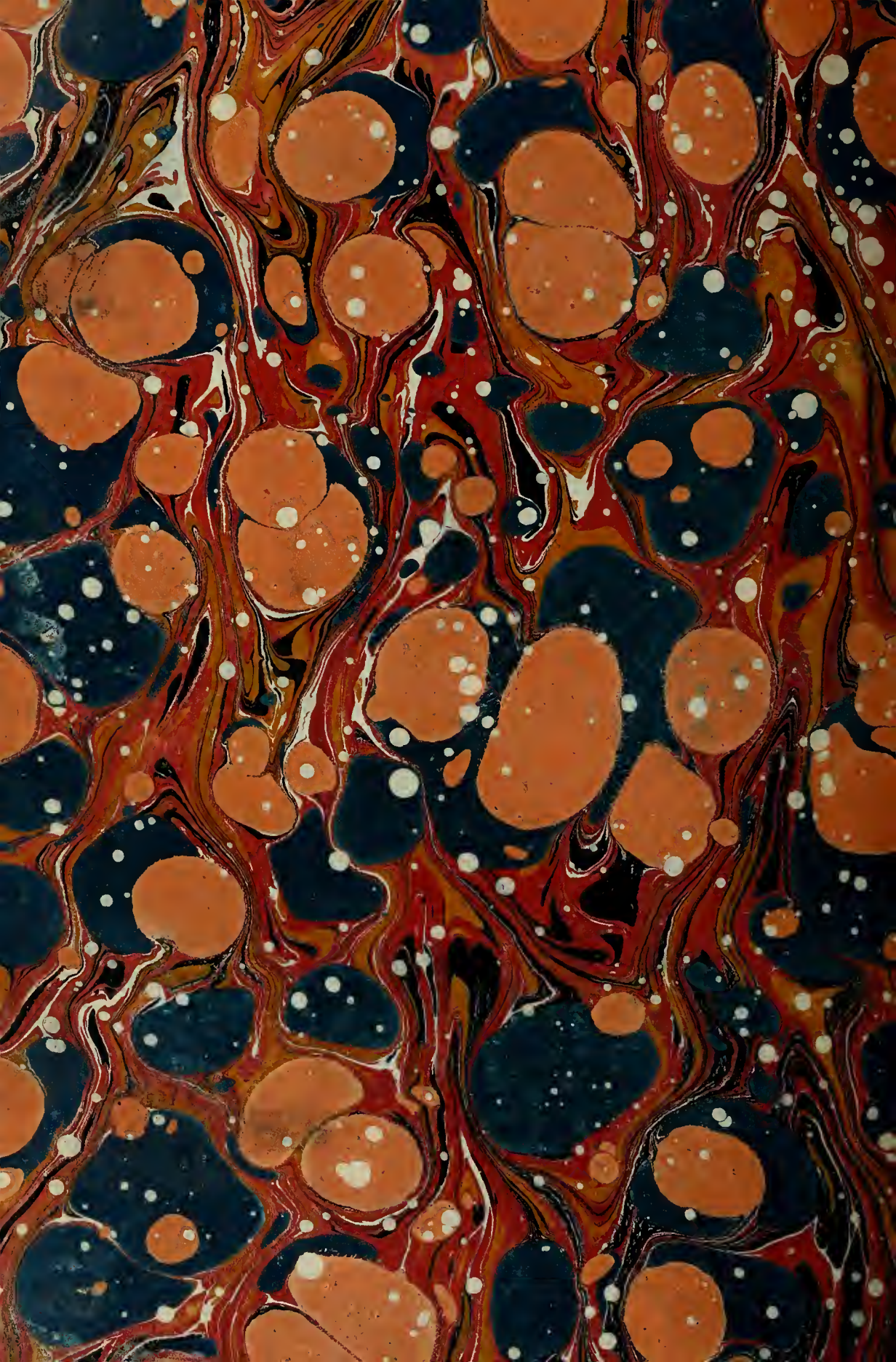
"Florence Nightingale."

From slight but significant circumstances constantly transpiring, the public may gather how faithfully and steadily Miss Nightingale is persevering in the lofty course she has adopted as that of her life's aim. They find that she is quietly adding to those stores of practical knowledge and experience, which she has hitherto so effectively devoted to the service of her suffering fellow-creatures,

and which she evidently purposes dedicating to their cause, when the "Nightingale Fund" shall have placed munificent means at her command for the farther carrying out of her vast design. By occasional tidings of her movements, we find her occupied in visiting surgical hospitals, examining medical wards, inspecting infirmaries, and continually treasuring up fresh opportunities for observation and administration. Like a truly great and modest mind—hers never thinks it can cease to learn.

With such a nature,—at once so humble yet reliant, so tender, yet powerful and energetic, so devoted, so firm, and so liberal, —Miss Nightingale will doubtless effect beneficial results to her species now unforeseen in their full extent. She who appropriated her own fortune with a lavish hand to the work she had undertaken, will assuredly distribute with judicious outlay sums of large amount committed to her disposal. God direct and speed her in her new task, as he manifestly guided and protected her through the previous one! His blessing rests upon such single-souled beings as Florence Nightingale; and it visibly re-emanates through the multiplied blessings His grace enables her to shed upon mankind.

Not only in the direct benefits conferred by such a woman as Miss Nightingale, does her sacred commission stand revealed; but in the indirect effects produced by her example, is her heaven-sent goodness presented to the world. It is this thought—that she is an evidence of her Creator's vouchsafements to his creatures—that Miss Nightingale must submit to the gaze of admiring humanity. It must reconcile her to have her motives canvassed, her character scrutinized, her actions applauded; and moreover, when her modest delicacy would shrink from homage, let her benignly remember that gratitude is an irrepressible feeling, and must be yielded its eager and enthusiastic utterance.

In Florence Nightingale all the world glorifies a woman who embodies the principle of devotion, in the widest sense of the word; true devoutness to God,—worshipping him by best service, in benefiting her fellow-mortals; and fervent consecration of herself to a high and immortal cause.

THE END.